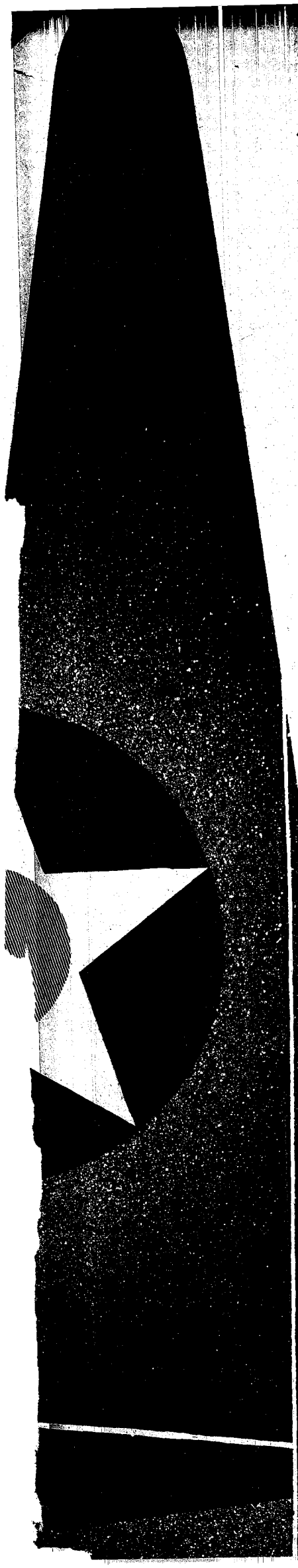

JANUARY 6, 1942 FIFTEEN CENTS

# NEW MASSES

## The Red Army's New Weapons By Colonel T.

## HOW TO BEAT THE LUFTWAFFE

*The USA can surpass Axis plane production. Why it hasn't—to date. By Bert Talcott*

## BRITAIN'S FRONT ON THE PACIFIC

*by Claude Cockburn*

## VIENNA IS A DEAD CITY

*by Richard Wiener*

## SENSATION FAIR:

*The story of a Master Reporter. Samuel Sillen reviews Egon Erwin Kisch's autobiography*

1892

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# Between Ourselves

WE MISSED one opportunity to say Merry Christmas to readers and other friends last week, when the announcement of our coming Open Editorial Board Meeting crowded practically everything else out of these columns. It isn't too late, though, to say Happy New Year. 1942 arrives as an uncommonly bouncing baby, lusty and promising. What will happen in the period before he has grown his beard and taken up his scythe, who would attempt to predict? He comes into a world of struggle, but a struggle infused with hope and resolution and courage. To our readers and with them, to the peoples everywhere engaged in that struggle, we say—and neither the printed nor the spoken words can express the fullness of our spirit as we say it—"A Happy and Victorious New Year!"

And a postscript to Christmas: we're not at all in the position of the person who groans when he receives Xmas cards from the five or six people he forgot to include in his own list. We simply do not have a list—if NM ever attempted such a thing, sending the cards would require the services of its entire staff for several weeks. Which doesn't prevent us from wishing every year that it were possible. We do at least want to say thanks for the flood of greetings received at this end. They were of all kinds from the conventional "Season's Greetings" to every imaginable variety of unique designs, many of them drawn especially for NM. Best of all in originality of ideas and artistic execution were those with a victory theme, which evoked the cartoonists' wit and the writers' verbal powers to a degree surpassing anything we've seen before in the way of Christmas cards. We were grateful, too, for the special little sentence or phrase which several individuals and organizations scribbled at the bottom of the card, concerning the magazine itself: "A wonderful job; keep it up." . . . "The whole family reads you, we couldn't do without it" . . . these were some of the sentiments and, as at least one reader assured us, "It isn't the Christmas spirit—I feel this way all year round!"

Then there were the communications which can't exactly be classified as greetings but which helped to make a happier Christmas. From a small town in Idaho we heard that: "Until the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor I saw NM only occasionally, by courtesy of a friend who sometimes passed his copy on to me. Recently I subscribed and my first issue came out that exciting week beginning December 7. The Gropper cartoon on the cover of the "Guide to the War" copy now hangs on my wall. I read every word of the Guide and haven't missed more than a few paragraphs in each issue since. Two things that particularly pleased me were the articles by Frederick Field on Japan ['How Strong Is Japan?,' December 16 issue, and 'What the Mikado Wants to Loot,' December 23]. I, just like a lot of people, had never known very much about Japan, that is, its resources and economic and political structure, and Mr. Field's pieces filled the bill pretty thoroughly, I thought. Please have him do other things like this sometime. Your Claude Cockburn, whom I've always enjoyed, seems to me to get better with each sudden dramatic development in world affairs. Perhaps all good journalists thrive on such things. But personally I don't read Cockburn only for his journalism—in the strict sense of the word—excellent as that is. His comment, which accompanies or perhaps is really part of his reporting, illuminates as much as does his factual information. Incidentally, I'd like you to know that foreign comment is immensely relished—as is all foreign news—by the people here. This may not sound like news to you; maybe you'll think, 'Who in America doesn't relish such things now?' But it may also be that the people of other regions haven't yet broken away from the habit of thinking of my state and those nearby as 'inland' or 'insular' to an extent that dampens our interest in anything 'foreign.' My own guess, to judge by what's happening here and what I gather is happening elsewhere—is that there will be less talk of 'regions' from now on. We're all in this together and we're in it to win."

From New Orleans comes a bulletin, *Port Light*, published by the waterfront section of the Communist Party, which reprints Gropper's drawing (December 16 issue) of the worker holding a "Free Browder" petition signed by Americans from all walks of life. "It seemed to us to fit in just right with our Free Browder article and we couldn't resist using it," explains the note accompanying the bulletin. The article itself points out that "All ports have passed resolutions to free Browder. To date seventy-five ships have petitioned President Roosevelt to release Browder."

Come to our editorial board meeting on January 9. There will be room for everyone—Webster Hall—and everyone will have a chance to speak his mind. We are, as we have said many times, a magazine that belongs to its readers and we want those readers with us in the vital matter of planning for this most vital year. Writers and artists, veteran contributors to NM will participate. The meeting will be at 8 PM sharp, Friday evening, January 9—admission is free.

Just in case you haven't made your New Year's Eve plans yet—don't forget NM's big "Howitzer Hop" at the Royal Windsor, 69 West 66th St., NYC. Music will be furnished by two well known orchestras—Don Redman and his radio headliners, and Don Fiorenza and his radio rogues. Tickets are 85 cents in advance, 99 cents at the door.

## Who's Who

BERT TALCOTT is a West Coast newspaperman. . . . Claude Cockburn was formerly editor of the Newsletter *The Week*. . . . Colonel T. is the pseudonym of a military expert. . . . Meridel LeSueur and Dorothy Schmidt are midwestern writers. . . . Richard Wiener is a journalist who, with this issue, appears for the first time in NM. . . . Frank T. Baker has frequently written for this magazine on Latin-American affairs. . . . Myra Page's reviews have appeared in NM before. . . . Milan Vlasov is a Yugoslavian writer. . . . Andreas Niebuhr is an authority on German economy.

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NEW MASSES
VOLUME XLII JANUARY 6 NUMBER 1

# HOW TO SURPASS THE LUFTWAFFE

***America can outproduce the highly streamlined Axis aircraft industry. Why it hasn't done so to date. Lack of planning and coordination. Bert Talcott outlines the proposals to step up production.***

*Los Angeles.*

THE sinking of American, British, and Japanese warships by planes has exploded obsolete conceptions of naval combat and placed new emphasis on aircraft in both land and sea operations. Though the lesson of air power has proved costly, it is also one of the most significant pieces of news that has come out of the war. For there is no doubt that this country can surpass any other in the production of military and naval planes of all types. We have already made great strides in this respect, and the future holds even greater promise.

Let us take a look at some of the recent developments. During each of the past two years the total number of planes of all kinds that have been turned out has trebled: from 2,400 in 1939 to 6,000 in 1940, to an estimated over 20,000 in 1941. Production in October 1941 was 1,914; in November it went above 2,300, a tremendous increase. Undoubtedly it will be even higher in December. We are today capable of building 100 heavy bombers and 300-400 medium bombers a month. By the end of 1942 it is estimated that some 700 four-motor air monsters will be manufactured monthly, while about 9,000 medium bombers are expected to be produced during the next twelve months. These estimates were made prior to the Japanese attack; undoubtedly they can be stepped up.

These ships are of excellent quality. Our fighting craft have made great advances in speed, range, ceiling, fire power, and bomb load since 1939. US planes already lead the world in several of these features. The production of aviation engines has also greatly increased, the output of crucial motors rising tenfold since September 1939 to 3,100 in the month of August 1941. Plant capacity of the industry has trebled and several hundred thousand workers have been adapted to its needs.

These are prodigious accomplishments. Yet there is another side of the picture. Now that America is involved in all-out war against the Axis, it is important that we understand what the shortcomings are and act to eradicate them without delay.

RECENTLY the people of Los Angeles were treated to a thrilling experience when over 100 combat planes took off together from Long Beach field for England. Grouped in conquering V's were Consolidated four-motor Liberators, Douglas DB-7 attack bombers, Boeing flying fortresses, Lockheed Hudsons, Vultee Vanguard fighters, Vega Ventura bombers, North American fast trainers, and Lockheed P-38 interceptors. An inspiring sight. At that very moment, however, the casual motorist, passing the Lockheed-Vega plant in Burbank, might have seen a large number of Hudson bombers parked on the field. This too was an impressive sight, but in a different sense. For these planes—close to 150 of them—were indefinitely grounded for lack of engines.

As a result, Lockheed-Vega, which had been operating on a six-day basis, cut out Saturday work. And there was not enough to keep the workers busy even for five days. To save appearances, foremen were telling the men to slow down so that available work might be stretched over eight hours. Perhaps in a few weeks engines will take a sudden spurt; then Lockheed airframes will fall behind, due to the recent curtailment in production. Similar situations have been prevalent everywhere. Shortages in parts, engines, materials, machinery, skilled men. Who's to blame?

Basically the fault is lack of planning, the absence of a coordinating instrument with full authority to direct the expansion of a gigantic war industry whose backlog of orders is approaching the fantastic sum of $10,000,000,000. Underlying this planlessness is the business-as-usual mentality in full sway. While large firms hog contracts and jockey for profits and power, production suffers. Production suffers too when precious time and resources are wasted in producing and experimenting on commercial planes.

The business-as-usual attitude also expresses itself in regard to the problem of training the tens of thousands of skilled men needed. Companies have heretofore insisted on assuming the responsibility for such training. The result is, that in an industry of over 500,000 employees, there are probably not many more than 1,000 apprentices. The employers meanwhile have encouraged private training institutions, which have been nicknamed "clip schools" since most of them are little better than money making rackets. There is a simple solution to this problem. Many thousands of skilled workers in Detroit and other auto centers are today idle because of the sharp curtailment of car production. These men are obviously unable to undertake, at their own risk and expense, the task of moving themselves and their families 2,500 miles out to the West Coast (to earn twenty-five to fifty cents less per hour than they have been getting!). But the aviation companies don't want these men—they are too union-conscious. The employers prefer totally unskilled fellows from rural communities of Arkansas, Texas, or Oklahoma.

Discrimination in hiring of certain racial minorities further adds to this problem. Recent hearings of President Roosevelt's committee on racial discrimination in war industry showed that all aviation corporations on the west coast engage in such reprehensible practices. These practices are not only bad for morale, but bad for production. There is, for example, a shortage of skilled molders and the quality of molding in the aircraft plants is often none too good. There are, on the other hand, many highly skilled Negro (and Mexican) molders working in small ornamental foundries. But the invaluable services of these workers are denied the aviation industry since Negroes, if hired at all, are in the vast majority of cases assigned to janitor work irrespective of any particular skill they may possess.

The business as usual approach is all the more serious in an industry which is attempting to do within a few years what it took the automobile industry several decades to accomplish. It must be remembered that this industry until only two years ago was in the custom job stage, with orders on a particular model hardly ever exceeding twenty-five planes. This makes it all the more essential to plan and organize production as efficiently as possible. The technical problems involved in transforming aviation into a mass production industry are enormous. Layout of plant, distribution of departments, accessibility of his task to the worker, elimination of unnecessary motions and the building of special tools, machinery, jigs, and fixtures—these are problems which cannot be solved by fiat. But much can be done to hasten the process and incalculable improvements can be introduced immediately.

ANY AVIATION WORKER'S description of the internal life of his plant will give one the impression of a huge chaotic meshwork, of men running hither and yon in search of tools or parts, of incomplete sub-assemblies

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being routed from one end of the plant to another for the next operation, then back again over the length of the plant for a third, of workers piling all over each other to get at their particular tasks. Much of this confusion is due to poor layout of the plant, which in turn is often the result of unplanned factory expansion. At Lockheed, for example, there are no fewer than six paint departments.

The result of this planless expansion is a lack of a rational assembly process and all the compounded inefficiency that goes with this state of affairs, such as scrapping of parts, misplacement of materials, inordinate increases in clerical work, etc. This inefficiency means not only more costly planes but fewer planes. Layout and aircraft methods engineers are undoubtedly not the most experienced men in the world. But there are numerous highly competent men in other industries, and these surely can be drafted for this crucial work. Here again the low wage policy of the aviation companies stands in the way; they are content to assign highly complex tasks to relatively untrained men who receive as little as ninety cents an hour.

Ridding the airplane plant of gross inefficiency will still not solve its production problems completely. Only mass production methods will accomplish that. But mass production is impossible unless our aviation manufacturers agree to take a sharp turn in the question of design. It is a problem the Russians, and the Nazis too, have gone a long way toward solving. Our insistence on perfection calls for never-ending changes in model, not only during the experimental stages, but even long after actual production has begun. It is as though we had all eternity to whip Hitler and his allies, or that it would be possible at some foreseeable future time to work out the perfect plane.

The need for simplification is at the heart of the problem. We have altogether too many models—even army men admit that—and our planes are too complicated in design, too smoothly finished, too "manicured," as the workers put it, too overburdened with detail. Wallace Carroll, the United Press reporter who recently visited the Soviet Union, tells an interesting story about the assembling of the first US planes to arrive in Russia from Great Britain. "The British had put several gadgets in the plane which had added several hundred pounds weight and cut its speed fifteen miles an hour," writes Carroll. "The Soviet engineers took one look and decided the gadgets would have to go."

An even more fundamental matter is involved. Some time ago a Nazi Messerschmidt, which had been downed in combat over England and managed to land fairly intact, was brought to Los Angeles and analyzed thoroughly by Vultee engineers. Their conclusions are revealing. The Germans, these experts admit, "appear to have simplified the plane's basic structural design to eliminate complicated assemblies and parts and to have achieved production economy by loosening up manufacturing tolerances [the allowable fractional variations in the size of parts—B. T.] in so far as possible." Simplification of construction so as to eliminate costly hand labor and make possible the mechanization of assembly work are at the bottom of Nazi mass production of planes. It is the chief reason why their output still considerably exceeds our own.

These production problems will, of course, have to be worked out by engineers—and quickly. But the government can help by ending the practice of subsidizing inefficiency. In recent contracts manufacturers have been guaranteed a certain percentage of profit on set cost. However, if "unforeseen" costs develop, these are also paid, the profit remaining as originally specified. This is a plain invitation to permit conditions which pile on such "unforeseen" costs. And in subsequent orders the higher cost is likely to prevail, thus boosting the profit per plane.

PRIMARY to any basic solution of the problems of plane production would be the lifting of the industry out of its present anarchic condition through establishing a national board of control along the lines of the Murray Industrial Council Plan. Such a board would consider the entire aviation industry as "an integral production unit" in allocating orders, coordinating expansion, assigning priorities, scheduling production rates, surveying labor needs, and handling the other problems of the industry. This central planning body would have to be cloaked with proper authority and, most important, should provide full representation to labor. For the unions can furnish the strength of purpose, practical experiences, breadth of outlook, and unwavering consideration for the common good necessary to fulfill all the vast potentialities of aviation production.

The CIO plan also calls for regional councils which would subdivide the work of the national body and concentrate on local problems. In a city like Los Angeles, the most important aviation center of our nation, where 125,000 aircraft and parts workers are already employed—and the number mounting daily—such a local setup could be of incalculable value. It could arrange for pooling of materials in case of shortages, for exchanges of improved methods and patents, for sharing of skilled manpower. Vultee, for example, has worked out certain excellent methods in the fashioning of sheet metal parts. Douglas has developed moving production line on wing assembly. Vega has introduced important innovations in plant layout. But these advances remain largely isolated, confined to the single plant of origin.

But more, a center like Los Angeles, with its great concentrated intensity of aviation industry, can organize its vast resources so as to utilize every available machine, every extra man-hour for the building of planes. It is clear that only a centralized coordinating body could undertake so vast a job. The OPM office here has made a tentative start in that direction by means of a general survey of productive facilities. As a result, W. S. Rosencrans, OPM district coordinator, has come to the conclusion that the city's war production could at least be doubled by full utilization of its present mechanical plant and resources. There are still 4,500 factories out of a total of 5,000 in the area entirely outside the war program.

This, of course, opens the question of subcontracting. The reluctance of large companies to sublet work is exceeded only by their distaste for sharing original contracts. Half a dozen aircraft manufacturers possess three-fourths of the present orders. Backlogs in some cases are so mountainous that they would require a generation to fill. After a certain type of plane, perfected by one company, is in production, there is no reason why other firms could not be assigned to turning out the same model. This has already been demonstrated in the case of the Boeing flying fortress, which is now being produced by Douglas and Vega. Another instance is the Consolidated four-motor bomber, which the Ford Motor Co. is preparing to produce at a new plant near Ypsilanti, Mich. These examples are, however, exceptional. Many highly competent aircraft plants are kept at inferior work merely because their political alliances are not as good as their competitors'.

As for the subcontracting of parts, though the automobile industry is already producing an increasing number of fuselages, and other parts, as well as airplane engines, subcontracting is still very limited. There is the case of an important Los Angeles rubber company which recently adapted its plant to producing self-sealing (bullet-proof) aviation gas tanks. Yet it has been unable to get assignments from aircraft companies which are anxious to retain the profits from making these tanks themselves. Hence the rubber company has been forced on a two-day week, and its workers are tasting the joys of "priorities unemployment."

In the aviation industry, as in the auto, steel, aluminum, copper, and other industries, the best ideas for expanding production of essential war materials have come from the organized workers. Over a year ago the Reuther Plan, sponsored by Walter Reuther, head of the General Motors division of the United Automobile Workers—CIO, proposed to attain mass production of planes by conversion of the auto industry through retooling. The plan was given the cold shoulder by OPM Director William S. Knudsen and other business-as-usual diehards in Washington. Only now, with auto production reduced to the vanishing point and unemployment mounting into the hundreds of thousands, has large scale conversion reached the stage where it is being seriously talked about (though action still remains insignificant). The fact that many auto companies are already producing plane parts and engines proves the practicability of the basic principle of the Reuther Plan. A further illustration: at the Cleveland Fisher Body plant



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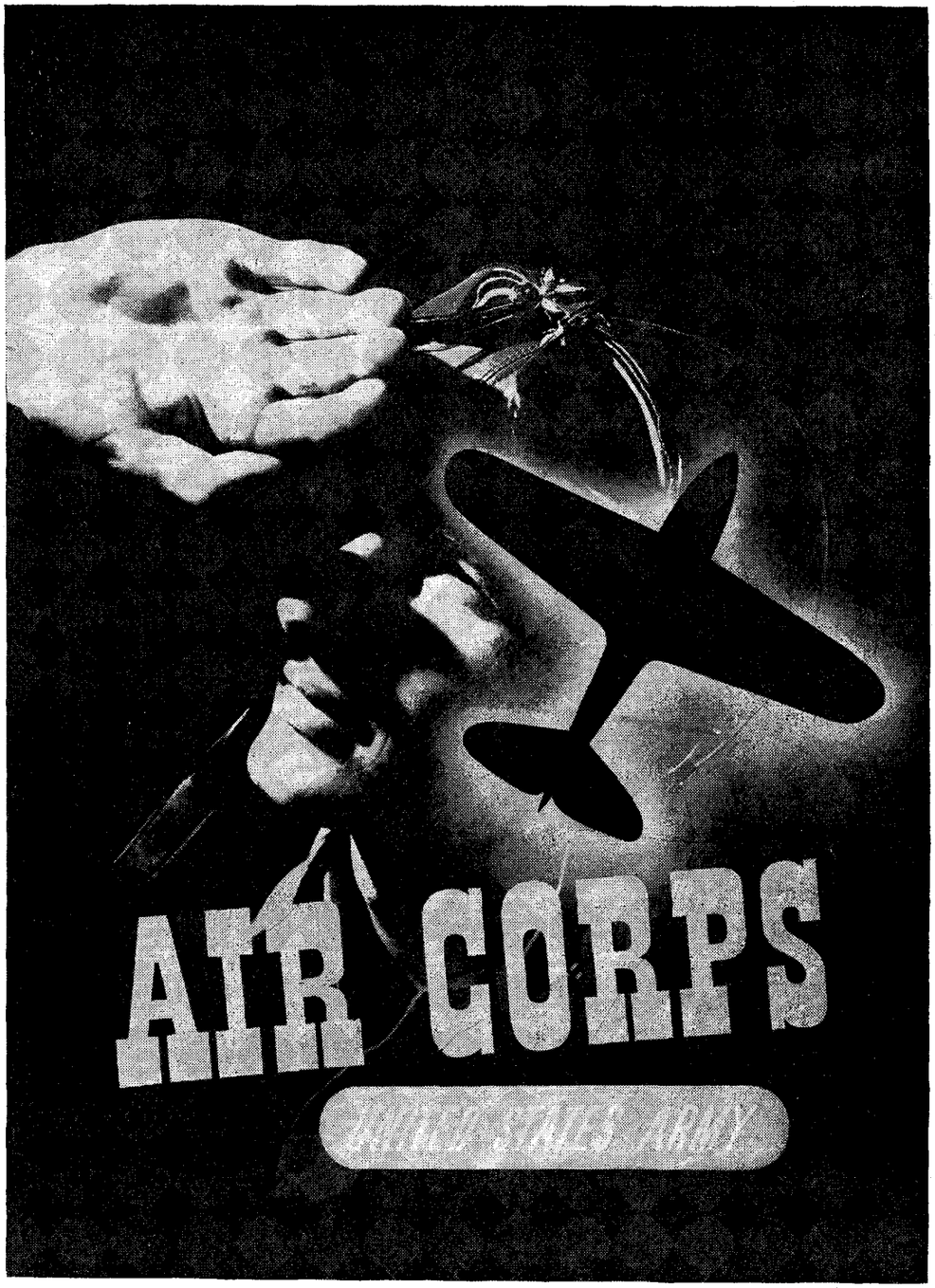
alone there are, among many other idle machines, nineteen giant Toggle presses, each of which costs from $150,000 to $175,000. It would require years to duplicate these presses for the aviation industry—yet they could now be transferred with minimum loss of time. The same can be said of the thousands of double action presses now standing idle in the Detroit auto plants; there are probably not more than a dozen of these presses in all the aviation factories of Southern California!

Another proposal for aviation, recently put forward by Richard Frankensteen, CIO director of aircraft, concerns itself with the crucial problem of training skilled personnel.

Labor's awareness of these problems is making itself felt increasingly at the point of production—inside the plant. Production committees have already been set up by the UAW-CIO at North American and Vultee, and the union is planning a regional production conference in January. Dale Reed, president of the great Lockheed-Vega Machinists' Local (AFL), recently announced as a standing point of agenda for stewards' meetings "ideas for improvement of present production methods or suggestions of new." Also the CIO diecasters union is arranging a regional conference for the discussion of production among representatives of the union, companies and the OPM. CIO unions in other fields have already held similar conferences which proved highly successful, according to OPM head Rosencrans.

PROPOSALS already worked out by plant committees include such subjects as apprenticeship plans; health, sanitation, and safety problems; materials conservation through cutting down of scrap; traffic; defense housing; etc. At North American the grievance committee won consent from the management to help workers purchase their own tools on the installment plan—an arrangement that will help obviate the confusion and loss of time due to shortage of tools. The unions could also turn their attention to improving attendance records (weekly absences often run as high as five percent), to cutting down the tremendous labor turnover, which is twice that of other comparable industries, and to engaging more actively in the training of new workers or retraining of old. There is already talk in the unions of shock brigades of the best workers who would go from department to department helping to iron out difficulties and increase efficiency.

The pioneer status of the aviation industry widens the possibility of creative contributions by the workers. Instances of little jigs and other enabling instruments being invented by aircraft workers are extremely numerous. Striking recognition of this fact came recently from the Lockheed management, which posted a notice asking that all such work aids developed on one shift be made available to the others. Vultee has a suggestion prize plan and every week makes cash grants (though not generously enough) to half a dozen worker-inventors.




ONE *of the prize winning posters in the Museum of Modern Art's recent competition for Posters for National Defense. By John Atherton.*

A couple of more examples. At Lockheed there is a heavy press stamping out a certain part by means of a deep drawn die. The piece is formed by successive stages as the press is held up by a stack of plywood. Each time the press rises, another layer of the wood must be removed. This operation proved very troublesome until one of the men devised an instrument consisting of a long pole with a suction cup at the end. Now the layer is removed almost without delay while the press is rising.

Even more significant was the discovery made by a North American drop hammerman. The part of the cowling on which this worker's department was working developed a troublesome "wrinkle" which took hours to straighten out. Experimenting around, this fellow discovered by hammering out three parts at a time that not only was the "wrinkle" eliminated, but production in the department was doubled.

Labor's full participation in the management of the war production program can open undreamed of possibilities for utilizing the mechanical genius of the American worker who has spent a lifetime "playing with" machines. By engaging the worker directly and consciously in the battle of production, the country gains the assurance that this battle, as well as its larger objective—the military destruction of Hitlerism — will be carried out to a victorious conclusion.

BERT TALCOTT.



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# BRITAIN'S FRONT ON THE PACIFIC

***Claude Cockburn cables the reactions of London to the Japanese drive in the Far East. How to mobilize India's vast manpower.***

*London (by cable).*

I NOTICED that at Christmas time the big London bookstalls were featuring Mahan's writings on sea power. I doubt that you could have found a copy of Mahan in those bookstalls at any other time in the last twenty years or more. That is a not uncharacteristic sign of the times. For as they read the news from the Far East and the whole Pacific area, the British, who have the sense of sea power in their bones, are now—paradoxically as it may seem—thinking seriously for perhaps the first time since the battle of Jutland in 1916 about the meaning of sea power and its loss. The *Times* came right out with it some days ago when it declared that we had not been in such a situation since the loss of that power to the French in the western Atlantic in the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

The news that the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* had been lost vibrated instantly through London in a way which revealed that the disaster was more immediate and intelligible to large numbers of people (particularly to older people) than anything which has happened in this war. After Dunkirk there were people who actually liked to say that after all we were now "on our own"—they were obviously somewhat relieved that history, as they supposed, had come back to a dangerous but intelligible position. Naturally, such an attitude is not by any means universal here. But I think it is worth drawing attention to, because only by understanding it can you also understand the depth of the feeling aroused here by the setbacks in the Far East and the discussion about why they could not have been avoided. It is probably fortunate for the government that there has been the customary Christmas break in newspaper publication since there were many signs of a rising tide of angry questions. That tide has been rising since the loss of our capital ships off Malaya and it rose with a rush at the news that Penang had been evacuated. This discussion and criticism is sharper than at any time since the loss of Crete and it is so deep and sharp because this time the whole of British feeling about sea power has been aroused.

You, as well as we, will have been studying for some time now the arguments and counter-arguments about the technical needs and possibilities of naval and air action in the present period. The outstanding fact here is

## Recent Chinese Art

*(Above) Harvest by Guerrilla Peasants — Woodcut by Chen Yen Chao.*

*(Left) Three Generations of Guerrillas — Poster by Ting Chung.*



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that public demand for a further thrashing out of responsibilities, and above all of future lines of action, is more vigorous than it has been for many months.

More important, millions here who never before were forced to consider the question seriously, are now compelled to think about the problem of British relations with India and Burma as a practical life and death matter. The first thing that occurs to the man in the street is the contrast between Free China's enormous resistance and increasing power, and the situation in India and Burma. Yet, as everyone is aware, the total population and hence potential manpower of India and Burma is scarcely less than that of China. Moreover, China, when she started her resistance, was at a very much greater disadvantage in terms of production than either India or Burma is today. The creation of a Chinese industry "behind the lines" is recognized as one of the almost miraculous performances of free people fighting to maintain and extend the independence of their country. But there is no reason why India should start from the same low level whence China was compelled to start. The events in Malaya have been watched with feelings colored by uneasiness not only as to whether proper preparations were made there but whether the mentality displayed in the early days in Malaya may not ruin much greater prospects in India and Burma. For people here—and their demand on this score will quite certainly be felt in Parliament very soon—are insisting that traditional viewpoints, whether they be on the side of the British government, of certain leaders of the Indian National Congress, or of the Moslem League, should be drastically revised in the light of an entirely unprecedented situation. To draw a rough analogy, one could say that in the opinion of many people the British government is attempting to use in India an instrument of government which is pretty futile from the standpoint of mass mobilization. India, with the proper political prerequisites, could be every whit as helpful as China. And it is fully recognized here that only the Chungking government's ability to express China's fighting demand for independence and progress has enabled the country, despite its lack of heavy equipment, to resist Japan for more than four years—a resistance which has recently passed to a partial offensive on so many fronts.

OBVIOUSLY, it would be absurd to try now to find too close analogies between the situation as it was in China on the eve of the Japanese attack at Shanghai and the situation in India today. It would be equally absurd to attempt to find in traditional formulas any prescription for dealing quickly, effectively, and happily with the unprecedented situation in which the sole serious question is this: In a struggle which has its central front from Murmansk to Sebastapol, which aligns all progressive forces against the immediate threat of the fascist powers, which has already seen more than 400,000,000 of the Asiatic peoples in armed combat with the fascist aggressors—in such a struggle how can the peoples of India and Burma most rapidly and effectively be mobilized—or, perhaps one should say, released for service—in the same cause? That is the one practical question. There were grim indications in dispatches from India during the past couple of weeks that even the most elementary forms of mass civilian defense, even local defense volunteers, are being rendered impossible by the attitude of certain British authorities in India. How much more may this attitude be expressed when it comes to the question of Indian airplane and tank production. It has been alleged in the British Parliament that, although India's steel production has increased enormously, there is still virtually no aircraft or tank production. Of course it is impossible to give any official figures in support or rebuttal of this statement. But it is clear that for years British policy has tended to strangle Indian industrial production except in a few "approved" lines. And it is just as clear that, compared with the situation in China, the condition of India as a potentially mighty ally is totally deplorable.

As I have mentioned, on the day the Japanese reached the Indian Ocean at Penang there came to the British people an entirely new realization of what the struggle in the East is about. With that came a new readiness to insist upon a drastic overhauling not only of immediate defense arrangements but of basic policy in relation to India and Burma. Specifically, people are demanding a direct approach by the British government to the Indian National movement and to the Burmese Cabinet. Particularly significant is the fact that the demand is now being voiced, and powerfully voiced, not from the left alone, but from powerful quarters on the right, including the tory back benches. For these people, after all, are not the same as the people who betrayed France; they are not willing that India or Burma should be exposed, hopeless, to the enemy in the same way and for the same reason as France was in 1940.

CLAUDE COCKBURN.

## Silk and Lice

*Moscow (by cable)*

EVERY German town now has its share of women who walk about with eyes swollen from crying. Their husbands were killed at Leningrad, Moscow, and Rostov. Who knows what their thoughts are in endless and tormenting sleepless nights? Perhaps they recall happier times when their husbands wrote cheering postcards announcing victories and sent French perfume and Greek face creams. Perhaps the widows curse Hitler, who has ruined not only hundreds of European cities but millions of German families too. But not all of them are widows; there are wives as well. Their eyes shine too, not from tears, but from hunger. They wait with growing impatience for letters from the front and even more for parcels. These women as yet understand nothing and go on thinking about fat hams, squirrel coats, and silk stockings. But they will agree to less if they can get it. Some letters found on killed German soldiers are amazing for the petty beggarly requests they contain.

Here is one in a letter to Private Karberger from his wife residing in Neukirchen. "Thanks for gift of broom and mop." His wife writes to Private Kesters from Berne near Aachen: "One thing I want to ask you is to send some string if you can. There's none to be gotten here." These lines show us a picture of devastated Germany and the state to which Hitler has reduced the German people. From a country of advanced technology comes the call for a broom and string. Indeed, a holy crusade for a mop and the heroic battles for pieces of string. They overran most of Europe, looted all the countries, burned, destroyed, ate up and appropriated everything they could. And now these beggars are dying for the sake of a broom. Gertrude Hollman writes to her fiance, Gustav Rosenburg: "Send me some pink silk for a blouse and chemise. I've always longed for some." Her Gustav and his body lie among the snowdrifts at Volkhov. For miles around there are no shops, no silks, no house, no huts, only Gustav lying with his face in the snow, and surviving Gustavs no longer think of parcels and have more to think of than their sweethearts. Here is a letter which Private Franz Gebe wrote to his wife just before he was killed: "I don't know how to get rid of my lice." Franz goes on to write about the winter, about Christmas, and sends greetings to the folks at home, and then as a joke he asks, "Shall I send you some of our lice?" This is German humor, winter 1941 fashion.

The German rear still dreams of brooms and victories. Men at the front shout, "We're cold; we want no more victories—we die of victories and freeze to death from triumphs. We're going to perish in this snow like a pack of hungry wolves."

ILYA EHRENBOURG.



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# THE RED ARMY'S NEW WEAPONS

***Colonel T. tells of the remarkable innovations the Soviet fighting machine has introduced. The plane that fights tanks. The new use of mine fields.***

WHEN strategy is stripped of all hokum it is, as Moltke the elder put it, nothing but the application of common sense to an ever shifting set of circumstances in the business of leading an army. Tactics, however, is another matter. Because tactics is the science of actual fighting, this science and its methods change with the means placed at the disposal of the soldier.

The Red Army has produced a number of new weapons with resulting new tactics. All these innovations are original. Some of them made their appearance during the Spanish civil war. For example, a young Soviet military instructor was the first to use anti-aircraft guns for horizontal direct fire against land targets. The now famous terror of the tanks—the bottle of inflammable liquid—was also a Soviet innovation in Spain. During the Soviet-Finnish war a number of new things appeared, such as the armored sleigh for the transport of sappers and infantry. The tactics of tank protection for infantry was also worked out by Soviet tacticians.

An entirely new method of artillery bombardment of strongly fortified positions was successfully tried on the Mannerheim Line. That was the now famous "rocking" of pillboxes and blockhouses by concentrated artillery fire which churned up the earth around them and threw the whole structure out of alignment. This made it impossible for the guns to fire.

THE PRESENT SOVIET-GERMAN WAR has brought to light a number of still more important innovations in Soviet weapons, tactics, and methods. I will not describe in detail the tactics of the guerrillas of which much has been written. I will only mention the fact that now for the first time in history modern "semi-regular" guerrillas operate under conditions of their army's victorious advance. This creates an entirely new situation: the Red Army, as it advances, picks up and absorbs innumerable guerrilla detachments, led in many cases by regular army officers, and numbering in their ranks many trained regular soldiers who joined the guerrillas when their own units were surrounded and dispersed during the four months of the German advance. Thus the Red Army increases in numbers as it advances, despite the losses it naturally sustains.

In addition, the guerrilla camps and hideouts provide ready bases and nuclei for Soviet parachutists who are now being dropped ahead of the advancing Red troops in ever increasing numbers. As the Red Army advances toward their stamping ground, the guerrillas abandon their hit-and-run tactics and adopt a sort of semi-positional warfare, occupying points which command bottlenecks on the avenues of German retreat. Cuts in forests, dams, sunken roads, chasms, bridges are covered by the guerrillas' machine guns and rifles. A bottle of inflammable liquid drops on a tank from a tall pine tree. The tank goes up in flames and blocks the winter road which cannot be detoured because of deep snowdrifts. The whole retreating column is stuck and has to be abandoned. A troop train topples off an embankment. A detachment of Germans, seeking its way out of the great Russian forests, is hunted down by men who know both the art of war, and the forest to the last tree, to the last clump of ferns.

Such are the tactics of guerrillas when the blitzkrieg goes into reverse. These tactics are perhaps not very different from their tactics during the enemy advance. But now the morale of these *franc-tireurs* has been enhanced a hundredfold. They hear the rumbling of the Red Army's artillery growing louder instead of fading away into the distance. And each man grows in stature in direct ratio to the number of decibels of that rumble.

Another innovation is the employment of cavalry. It may not be new in principle, but the mass scale on which it is being practiced by the Red Army High Command has never been equalled anywhere. I do not know whether cavalry armies have been used in this phase of the war. But I know that numerous cavalry corps (two or three divisions, or between eight and eleven thousand horsemen) have been used in one spot, as witnessed by the actions of General Belov's Guards Cavalry Corps around Tula. These cavalrymen actually fight tanks by throwing inflammable liquid bottles straight from the saddle. The light tanks and armored cars of the Soviet cavalry, of course, are almost as much tied to the winter roads as the German tanks. But in between the roads and trails the horsemen infiltrate between the columns with their automatic weapons, submachine guns, and horse-drawn *tachankas* with heavy machine guns which can fire to the rear and flanks at a gallop. The tactics of a battle of horsemen against tanks is something entirely new, at least on a mass scale.

Soviet war industries have produced tanks which move through snow better than the German tanks because they have a wider caterpillar tread. There are rumors of a special Soviet "snow-tank" but details have not come to the attention of this writer and he prefers to reserve judgment. It is possible that so-called "aero-sleighs" have been adapted to mechanized fighting. Such sleighs are driven by airplane propellers.

The extensive use of land mines, by the tens of thousands in one sector alone, is also a Soviet innovation. The Germans have been complaining about that for months. They are using the same method themselves during this retreat. But the Nazis did not plan their retreat while the Russians in the early weeks of the war planned theirs. So the Soviet mine fields were well prepared in advance and the German makeshift fields cannot compare with the terrible "checkerboards" the *Wehrmacht* has to contend with all the way from the border to the high water mark of its advance into Russia.

In the realm of artillery tactics the Red Army devised and successfully used what would be called the "artillery wringer." This is how it worked, for example, during the first Timoshenko offensive around Smolensk, back in August. The Germans had pushed a deep salient to Yelnya. The Red Army command, instead of attacking the flanks of the salient in an effort to "bite it off," relied on its excellent artillery (of which it always had a preponderance) to do the job. Numerous batteries were massed at the "root" of the salient, on both sides of it. Then the infantry attacked the "head" of the salient and started pushing back the Germans through the bottleneck under the mincing-machine fire of the artillery.

And, finally, we come to the greatest Soviet innovation, which American experts called the only really new thing in this war. This is the "anti-tank-plane" which has three fundamental characteristics: (1) it is armored so that only heavier AA shells can damage it; (2) it flies so low and so fast that it is practically impossible to hit it with anything except machine guns and rifles. It operates at such low levels that the average fighter cannot reach it; and, (3), it seems to have a special bombing device which "fires" bombs instead of simply dropping them, and yet it is not a dive bomber. This new plane seems to be responsible for the terrific havoc wrought by Soviet aviation upon the Nazi mechanized columns in the last few weeks.

It is fortunate for the anti-fascist front that the Red Army High Command keeps its secrets out of sight of the war correspondents. And because of that, only glimpses of the new methods of warfare used on the Eastern Front reach the columns of the newspapers. We, who have no other means of information, cannot give a complete picture of what is new there, militarily. Hence, what I have written here is admittedly incomplete. However, it shows the following things: first, that the Red Army High Command is one of the most progressive and mentally flexible military organizations in the world; second, that Soviet engineers continually manage to invent something new; and, third, that a planned and centralized industry is able quickly to put into mass production a device which has been evolved on the strength of recent war experience. COLONEL T.



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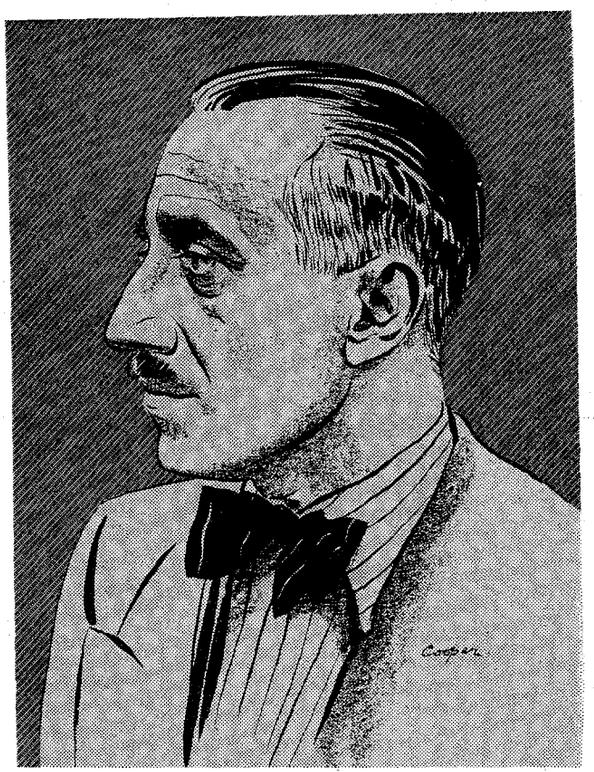
# HEROES OF THE PEN

***Remember their names: Gabriel Peri and Lucien Sampaix. They died in Paris before a Nazi firing squad, but their words will never die. Why they were turned over by the betrayers of their country.***



*Gabriel Peri*

*Berne, Switzerland; Dec. 23—(By telephone to the New York* Times)

*Gabriel Peri and Lucien Sampaix, two veteran writers of the Parisian pre-war Communist newspaper* Humanite, *were among the 100 hostages shot last Thursday at Mont Valerien Fortress just north of Paris as one of the three "punishments" inflicted on the Parisian population by General Otto von Stuelpnagel in reprisal for the repeated bombing outrages during recent weeks.*

WHO were these men?

Peri, foreign editor of *L'Humanite;* member of the Chamber of Deputies, elected by his people; vice president of that Chamber's Foreign Affairs Commission; contributor to this magazine. He was arrested *in Paris* (remember that), on May 21 of this year just past, in the home of a friend. This was long, long after the French Communist Party had been run underground by its own government. (Remember that he was arrested in Paris.)

Lucien Sampaix, writer for *L'Humanite* and *Ce Soir,* the man who more than any other single individual was responsible for the exposure of *Les Cagoulards*—the French counterpart of our Ku Klux Klan, our Black Legion, our secret fascists and appeasers who sit in high places. General Weygand is a member of *Les Cagoulards.* Petain is such another. These are the men who sold out the great French nation to the Nazis.

These facts tell nothing of these men. There are no words now that can tell anything of these men. Betrayed by their government that they tried to warn, they were handed over *by their own government* to their nation's enemies, and done to death.

They were not alone in their death; that day ninety-eight other innocent people went with them, as hundreds had gone before them. To "punish" the French people for resisting their oppressors, their enemies, their murderers! Never—except in our time—have words been put to such base usage. Never—except in our time—has such hatred been sown in the hearts of men. Never—except in our time—has such widespread determination existed in every segment of the world's population—determination to see that we are done with fascism forever.

These men were writers; they used their knowledge, their living words, in defense of their fellow men; they used their native language to defend the people everywhere against their enemy—fascism. Every writer feels their loss. Every honest human being, writer or reader, scholar or illiterate, will feel their loss, even though their names are still unknown to multitudes.

In Spain we read their words, translated from French into our Spanish newspapers. We knew they were on guard for our liberties, our lives; for the lives and liberties of the Spanish people who were fighting. We knew they had counterparts all over the world who would not hesitate to speak out—day or night, and at peril of their very lives—in our interests, in the interests of those who work for a living all over the world. Honest writers are heroes; it has always been that way. And these men, these writers, these heroes, have lost their very lives because they did not hesitate to write the truth.

That is a hard thing to swallow. That is a hard thing to forget. We will not forget it. For just as we know that the people's writers are soldiers; that the courage of their pens should rival the courage of men's guns everywhere men fight today for liberty—in the Philippines, in Libya and on the Eastern Front and inside Europe—so we have also learned something else. We know that just as there were hooded men in France who watched and bode their time, and read with fear each word that Gabriel Peri wrote, each word that Lucien Sampaix wrote; we know that in Great Britain, in America, all over, there are also hooded men who read our words with fear. Who wait. And you do not have to be a writer, either. Nor do you have to be a Communist. You have merely to be a democrat, a union man, a fighter—to fight with word or action against the secret fascists, against the hooded men, against the appeasers of the fascists and the outright traitors—to have them list your name. To have them deliver you, if they get the chance, into the hands of the people's executioners.

We cannot give them that chance. We *will* not give them the chance. The men on Wake Island knew that fact; they died for it. The men on Luzon, in Singapore, and around Bengazi and Orel—they know that fact. They fight with guns; we fight, at home, with words, with lathes and drop-hammers, with pennies, nickels, dimes. So that the hooded men do not frighten us, writers, "non-combatants," civilians, any more than they frighten the people in Paris who hear the echoes of the firing squad. But we will not forget them.

To Gabriel Peri, to Lucien Sampaix, writers, Frenchmen, democrats, and heroes of the people, we can say what we said in Spain. And say it now with even more conviction, with even more assurance:

*Companeros—Salud! y Victoria!*

ALVAH BESSIE.



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# THE WAY TO TOTAL EFFORT

***Aftermath of the labor-industry conference. Bruce Minton writes of the unwillingness of certain employer groups to adjust themselves to the emergency. The significant data of the Tolan committee.***

*Washington.*

THIS is no time for recriminations. The failures of the past can well be put out of mind—so long as everything is now done quickly to overcome inadequacies and so long as those who held back before now respond to the needs of America at war. But on examination, certain employers are found not to be doing their share. In fact, they are impeding the production of war essentials. Their hesitancy probably stems from an inclination to cling to old patterns of behavior —what has been called business as usual.

In the case of the industry-labor conference last week it required the intervention of President Roosevelt to end employer obstruction and secure an agreement. This agreement is the three-point formula previously proposed by the associate moderator at the conference, Sen. Elbert D. Thomas of Utah. The three points are: no strikes or lockouts during the war, the peaceful settlement of all disputes, and the establishment of a War Labor Board to adjust all disagreements.

The representatives of industry, however, accepted the agreement grudgingly, qualifying their action with a statement which continued to insist that the union or closed shop was not a proper subject for consideration by the new War Labor Board. And undoubtedly there are some who still look to Congress to strike a blow at the war program by enacting anti-labor legislation such as the Smith bill.

But all things considered, the agreement was an important victory for the united war effort. And equally important, the AFL and CIO, for the first time since the 1935 split, acted in unison, with old rivalries in abeyance. This vital accomplishment was the outgrowth of the profound belief on the part of both labor bodies that nothing could be allowed to impede the war effort. Labor, by overcoming its old schism, contributed mightily to the drive toward victory.

THE POLICIES supported by the twelve management representatives at the President's conference only emphasize the unwillingness of certain employer groups to adjust themselves to the emergency. This inability to overcome prejudices was expressed in a recent issue of the *Wall Street Journal*. That paper was horrified at the suggestion that labor should participate with management in striving to attain maximum war production. The *Journal* saw this as an attempt by labor to "take over" industry. Moreover, it showed an impatience with plans to settle labor disputes peacefully. "It is, of course, not yet clear that either is the price of full wartime production, or that paying either price would buy it." The *Journal* still wanted to bargain, still hoped to get off "cheap." Yet it could not deny that management of itself had failed to assure adequate production. Talk of prerogatives hardly conforms to the realities of a nation in danger—the President has called for all-out participation in the war, and that means participation by those unwilling sections of big business as well as by workers, farmers, the people in general.

The Tolan committee, now holding hearings in Washington on various aspects of war production, has uncovered much relevant data. "The testimony before the committee was almost universal that production to date has been a failure, measured against the available facilities and the visible needs for military purposes," stated the committee's second interim report, published this week. The reasons for this inadequacy according to the committee, are to be found in the failure to use fully the largest and most efficient manufacturing facilities for the armament effort while methods of awarding contracts have excluded tens of thousands of small producers from participation in production.

Similarly, the Senate's Truman committee found that neither the Army nor the Navy had "a definite program for acquisition of specific equipment under specified terms and conditions." Without a clear idea of what was wanted, procurement officers attempted to get out from under by placing contracts only with "responsible"—that is, the very largest—firms. Instead of avoiding trouble, they waded in deeper. The large manufacturers wanted above all else to protect the value of their plants for the future; hence, they were more concerned with finding ways and means to keep business going along "as usual" than they were to fulfill orders. They had won contracts because they boasted of great amounts of productive equipment at their command. Once they had contracts in hand, they turned around and demanded that government either finance or build new plants so that contracts could be filled without causing any dislocation of their usual routine, and without forcing them to convert existing machinery.

The Tolan committee has offered a program to correct failures. The principal recommendation is the formation of a single civilian board of the federal government to be charged with full responsibility for procurement and for planning war production and the output of essential civilian goods. "This committee believes, after months of hearings throughout the country, that even the most influential quarters misunderstand the meaning of the term 'civilian morale' and the proper manner for enlisting it in the great undertaking which has been thrust upon us. Civilian morale should be recognized as a by-product of efficient organization of the national productive effort. . . . This requires a comprehensive and unified production plan and a single agency to centralize key decisions and decentralize operations."

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The committee proposes to eliminate the confusion and conflict that have arisen from the existence of several procurement divisions. Perhaps the great companies have had some legitimate complaint when they said they hesitated before converting plants because they were not sure what they would be called upon to produce. Centralization of procurement, with supervision over the letting of contracts, could obviate such uncertainty. Gov. Murray Van Waggoner of Michigan, where the automobile plants are located, has endorsed this method. The Washington *Post,* rather surprisingly, has advocated a similar procedure: "The needed agency is a department of supply, with authority to take the military shopping list and, like the British and the Canadians, to place it in production in every available factory in the land." Both the War Department and the OPM, however, fought this proposal in testimony before the Tolan committee.

As matters now stand, far too little of the country's productive machinery has been converted to supplying armament. Most of the new plants are still being built and will not be turning out any considerable war materials for many months. In consequence, conversion is all-important. It is true that the automobile companies—and they are only typical of other sections of big business—have objected that conversion is "impossible." Originally they told the government that only fifteen percent of their capacity could be shifted to defense. Now, however, since they are convinced that they will be unable to continue large-scale civilian production, some of them are changing their tune. They admit that as much as fifty percent conversion is feasible. The Division of Civilian Supply of OPM commented, "Probably even this estimate is low."

Without conversion, figures prove that the greatest proportion of American plant and manpower will not figure in the fight against the Axis. Along with conversion, ways must be found to grant contracts to a wide number of producers of all sizes. Only then will the full capacity of our industrial plant be geared to our needs. No doubt subcontracting is a hard nut to crack. But it is not nearly so difficult as has been contended. Tanks, planes, guns, and other material can be "exploded" into component parts, broken down into units so that intermediate and small plants can turn out these parts. Alex Taub, chief of the conversion section of the contract distribution division of the OPM, pointed to the experience of England. There they learned that "You can't design in a lump. You have to design in detail. So, as the job was developed, units were passed out to probable manufacturers, and by the time the job was ready, the experimental or pilot model was built, and the manufacturers had already made their production studies. But at no time was a tank built completely by some independent group, then burst to pieces, with someone saying 'Here are the pieces. Who can make them?' Always somebody in the industry was asked to mastermind the job as a whole."

But so far, certain sections of industry have not been too eager to sanction change. The OPM held hearings on the copper and nonferrous metal plan submitted by the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers to raise production of vital metals. Though the union offered specific and detailed proposals, the owners objected that such planning was an incursion on their domain. They refused to accept help. Nor did they present any alternative of their own. So copper, lead, and zinc are still being produced in inadequate amounts. Labor has also offered plans for speeding up production of aluminum, steel, airplane motors, and many other important materials and products, but so far nothing has been done to put these suggestions into practice.

Automobile employers who refused to convert plants earlier in the game are about to lay off three or four hundred thousand workers—because, now that car production has been cut to the bone, their former procrastination has resulted in an inability to use this experienced manpower in the war effort when it is most needed. But the automobile union, which warned of just this situation, is rebuffed in attempts to show how these workers can be trained for the future during their enforced idleness, and how they can be put back to work with least delay. The auto manufacturers say they won't be able to produce at maximum for a year. Government technicians and union specialists declare that a majority of the men laid off can be back at work in four months, all of them in nine months. The companies shrug and refuse to heed.

All of this leads back to William Knudsen, head of OPM and in charge of production for over a year. His record has been disheartening. The government does not tolerate inefficiency and lack of alertness on the part of military and naval commanders—witness the quick reshuffling of the high command after Pearl Harbor, a shakeup vigorously applauded throughout the country. There is no doubt that Knudsen is equally guilty of blunders and lack of foresight. He must go, because he cannot do the job and today time is precious.

In addition, labor is beginning to perceive that despite rebuffs, the task of mobilizing the nation's productive capacity will fall more and more on its shoulders. Several weeks ago I told of plans for forming union production committees in every community and plant, pointing out that labor feels that only by such means can all machinery and equipment be put to quick and full use. Many industrialists, of course, will be inclined to resist what they consider an "invasion of their prerogatives." But such a judgment of what labor desires is at best a serious miscalculation. Labor has no ambition to "take over"; it wants merely to cooperate with management and government in utilizing completely all available capacity. And labor's full participation is indispensable for victory. All sections of the population must take seriously the Tolan committee's warning: "We must hasten to understand the meaning of total war and to organize our economy for it."

BRUCE MINTON.



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# THE STORY OF DAN GARRISON

***The saga of one American. The unknown soldier who was loved by thousands and who died with his boots on. The man who helped his people fight fascism.***

THIS is the story of Dan Garrison. It is an important story because it does not tell about one man only. It tells about us all. And it is the pattern of a beginning. Many people take part in beginning what will be finished after them.

Dan Garrison died, and he was buried on a sunny day in Annapolis next to his father who was a captain in the US Navy. Had he lived on, he would have followed his fighting ancestors: he would have signed up in this most just of all wars—the liberation of the peoples from Hitlerism. His great grandfather fought with Washington and his grandfather with General Grant. But in his own way, Dan fought for his country too and deserves to be there. He died on a battle field. He was not buried in a uniform. His uniform would have been the blue jeans of the oil fields.

His belongings are in an old suitcase in Chicago—that pair of old blue jeans, somebody's cast off winter suit, a bunch of pencils tied like cord wood, some pamphlets, two strong pipes, a studded leather belt, and a manuscript half a foot high.

Many will remember Dan Garrison. In Oklahoma in the oil fields, in the cotton fields, in union halls, in little farm churches many remember his Bozo, the union clown of the Red Dust Players—union-made right down to his long-handled drawers. Who will forget in the unemployed fight Dan getting out leaflets in the night, distributing them in the morning. Others will not forget how he stood guard against a fascist mob in the southern Ozarks.

There are others who will remember the long trek, longer than any he made in box cars—as he said "from coast to coast and vice versa"—the long, long trek from one fight for justice to another. His story is important for that too. Somebody said that Dan was the guy who didn't finish anything. That's right. What Dan started in his life is too big to be finished. And he turned his back on the things a man can finish for himself alone, like success, career, and all that.

His folks—the ones he was born with, not those he came to be with—were well off. He was born with a real silver spoon in his mouth, an heirloom with a monogram. He was educated at Annapolis, St. John's, and in the best drawing rooms of Maryland. The family sent him to Oklahoma to learn the oil business, and then his education really began. He was to learn the business from the ground up, to an office chair which was waiting. He never got to the office chair. He discovered the people—his people.

He spent five years as a pipeline cat. And he wanted to write it. At night in Oklahoma he wrote it down; in the Seminole field up against real work and real people, dead tired after ten hours' ditch diggin'—he wrote it down. Of his old life he had nothing to say. And of the new he had so much, he had to learn to say it all over again.

This he learned first: You have to join up. Dan joined the Oil Workers' International Union. But he didn't get to finish being a pipeline cat or an organized union man. They didn't let him. With thousands of others he was laid off. Bulls stopped the freights to get the workers out of town.

He went on the bum. He shipped on a freight steamer. He worked tobacco, picked fruit, moved with the Okies. Sound familiar? He was meeting people and doing things and having things done to him—all this was matting under him like a great root the indescribable experiences of the people, weaving the heat at noon, nights of hunger, and the cold you never forget, of those thousands of experiences about which the people can never tell—except to each other.

Then he read Marx, Engels, Lenin, Browder.

You see, what happened to Dan is important because it is a pattern of a happening that weaves a warp in American life and is repeated and repeated in a pattern that is becoming strong, invincible.

Then he began to act. He had to. Timidly at first. Who can tell of the thousand frights, uncertainties that beset a person of his past, coming with all its frustrations, wounds, truncations, to the working class that is being forged in the events and necessities and heats of history. He drew up his first leaflets in the early unemployed and tenant farmer struggles. He wrote skits and songs and broadsides. He took down the stories that fell from the mouths of Oklahoma pickers, Okies, farmers, cats—all the unrecorded myth and legend of their lives that is spoken tough and hard and unrecorded, passing only from ear to ear, from heart to heart.

He read his plays to the Okies, the unemployed, the organizers. They listened, saw themselves; told him it should be plainer, added fact to fiction; and he listened. Some of his critics couldn't read, but they told him good things and nourished him like grain.

In Oklahoma, in those days, as now, there was much to be done and few to do it. And Dan Garrison found his battle field.

"Dan," we'd call him at work, "we've gotta have a skit on county medical relief by Thursday." "By next Thursday?" "No, this Thursday." "Why you long-tailed hell cats, this *is* Thursday." And that night we'd have the skit. He would write at rehearsal as we stood waiting for the pages.

He had come home and he had come to battle. His home was that struggle, on the street, in an office, at a meeting, in the night at a mimeograph, on the little stages of union halls and churches. He couldn't finish his plays, they had to be hot on the latest issue of tenant farmer, oil worker. We couldn't give him time to finish. Finish hunger? Finish organizing? Finish talking to the last man, making a speech? We couldn't let him finish.

Sitting hunched, piano banging, chorus rehearsing, scribbling the lines for the next act, fresher than the morning paper. Organizer, director, actor—he did all the nasty all-night jobs—in the strike kitchens, hitchhiking twenty miles to rehearsal, sleeping on farm floors, in barns. The Red Dust Players began to act Dan's plays in every county in Oklahoma. Dan never got on Broadway, but he had an audience no Broadway author ever had. Old men who had never seen a movie, tired children—laden women gathered in tiny wooden churches in the oil fields, in the farms, clapped their hands, swayed, joined in the chorus:

*It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord,*
*Standing in the need of land.*
*'Taint the banker, 'taint the planter, but it's me, O Lord,*
*Standing in the need of land.*

Oil workers laughed for the first time in fifteen months of bitter strife at Dan's Bozo tripping over his baggy trousers, mopping up the floor with his silly orange wig, punching home the union message with an extra sockeroo. All joining in the square dance at the end:

*Meet your pardner—promenade*
*Join the union—don't be afraid.*

*Swing at the head and foot couple too,*
*Side four go right and left through,*
*Down the center and cast off two—*
*What the heck can a poor man do?*

*Down the center and cast off six.*
*The union's gonna see that they change quick.*

*This sorta thing has got to stop*
*Grab your pardner and hoppity hop—*
*Promenade! O Promenade!*
*Everybody here is UNION MADE!*

They loved him. He wanted to write for the people and he did. His plays were not finished because the people had just begun.

He had another dream he didn't finish.



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*"Say, I thought this was a bandwagon."*

Michaels

When he was thirty-six, the last year he got to, Dan's dreams were still as fresh as when he was sixteen; he still saw his ideals flesh and blood and kicking up their heels and the dew on them. He dreamed of a people's theater in the illiterate, unorganized, culture-starved South. And this was not finished either. The pattern of the resistance that smashed that dream is a pattern that all America is fighting today—the pattern of reaction.

The southern tories were against that dream, to its glory. When the New Theater League took over the Commonwealth College property as a center for this people's theater, the state and penny fascist officials of the town of Mena—who had long been gunning for the school—now renewed their attack on the school as well as on all progressive forces in the South. A small crew of people, with Dan in charge, was left to work the farm and guard the property. Dan, Joe, a veteran farmer, a handful of young men, several women, and three small children were the only occupants of the 250-acre tract when three car loads of armed drunken thugs whipped up by the Klan and the "peace" officers drove onto the campus. Let Dan tell it in a letter to the New Theater League.

The goons have just left (noon) and will return this afternoon. Right after lunch the gang moved in with two trucks. They threatened to smash in the doors if the keys weren't produced. They literally took everything but the kitchen stove. Ransacked the office, the print shop, dining room; took the canned food, 1,500 half gallon jars, mules, cows, hosses, and the bull; all farm equipment, beds, stoves, chairs; and the library of over 5,000 volumes. As they drove up Otis jumped in the International and took out. Later some neighbors took E. and the three kids to Oklahoma.

Yep, they have taken everything except us; and, by God, heaven, hell, nor plain old dust will move us. Quillen made the statement that "if the nest is scattered the chickens will leave." Well, the chicken's nest is a hornet's nest. Demoralized? Fighting mad!

It's your move because we ain't. Love. Dan.

The little group was left with only the socks on their feet, cooking over an open fire.

This is a battlefield, you see. Dan got here his final wound. "You had to feel fit when those bastards came," he said, so he lived off aspirin and sat guard all night propped up.

Dan got worse but he didn't tell anybody. He went on running errands, talking at meetings, raising funds. Like any soldier of his heritage he went on fighting.

"Young man," said the doctor when he vomited blood, "don't do any work for a year."

"Fine," says Dan. "Black-eyed peas were cheap once."

"And go to a sunny clime," says the doc.

"How would Florida be?" says Dan laughing. And he went on fighting because the battle was still going on, and getting fiercer.

So he was buried at Annapolis, a new kind of fighter—an advance guard against Hitlerism.

No, he didn't finish anything. It isn't finished yet. That is what's important about the life of Dan Garrison as it is important about the lives of thousands of people today who are fighting on every front. If Dan were alive today, with his health back, he would take the gun to join them against the world's common enemy. He's gone.

But he hung his hat in the future; and it's in the future that you'll meet Dan.

And his work will be finished.

DOROTHY SCHMIDT.
MERIDEL LESUEUR.



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# VIENNA IS A DEAD CITY

***What happened to Austria after four years under Hitler. "The lights are out" and the people hunger. The inside story that was smuggled out of Europe before the USA entered the war.***

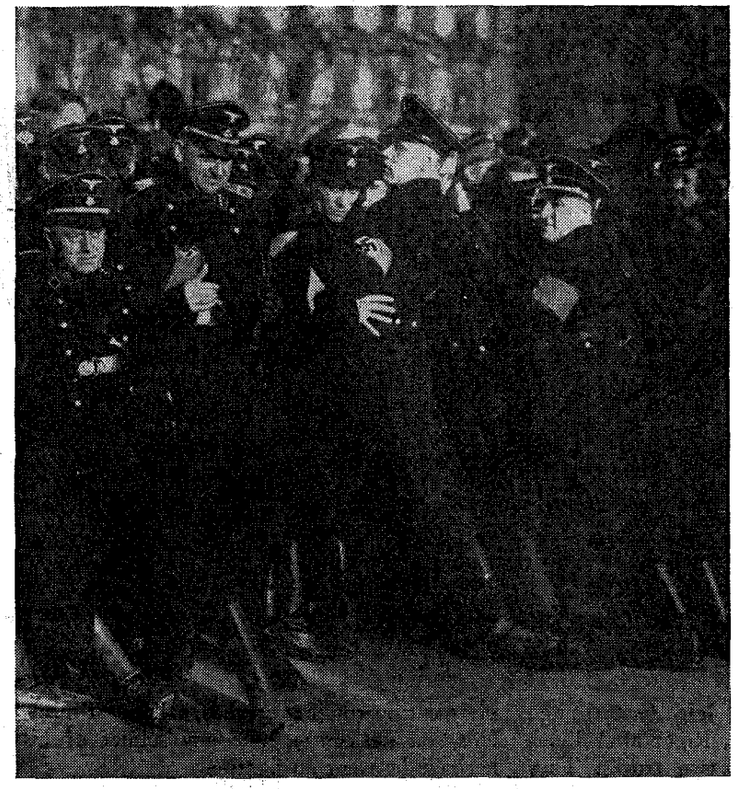
COUNT CZERNIN observed in a recent speech that "We Austrians are still fighting for the right to fight." And indeed it is true that Austria's plight has been overlooked. Only one who was born in Austria or had been living there for many years can really estimate the reaction of the people to the changes that the Germans have brought about. Although they speak the same language, there is a very great difference between the Prussian and the much milder, quite different Austrian. A part of Austria's strength lies in her unusual mixture of old traditions: mountain peasants of the Alps and those of the green valleys of Styria and Carynthia; Hungarian, Croatian, Czech, Jewish, Italian, Polish influences—all these have given a strongly cosmopolitan quality to the Austrian people. They definitely detest the conqueror from the North, and I well recall that day I came to pay my taxes; the man at the counter told me: "We have a lot of Prussian men in the office now. Don't think we like to work with them. On the contrary, we give them as much trouble as we possibly can."

How has Austria managed in the forty-five months under German rule? Let me give the impressions of some friends who were lucky enough to escape. And let me quote some passages from letters which are still coming out of Vienna. The language has to be very guarded because of strict censorship. But ways have been found to convey news. Such expressions as "We have plenty of food" and "We will win the war" invariably mean "We have nothing to eat" and "The Nazis will lose at the end."

"Vienna is a dead city," one old friend writes quite boldly. "You would not recognize it. Half of the shops are closed. Those formerly Jewish-owned did not always find a new manager, and besides many had to close because they could not get stocks to sell or because there was nobody left who could take care of the shop. Remember Kaerntnerstrasse, Graben, Kohlmarkt? Places where groups of people used to go sightseeing and shopping? Dead, all dead. The lights are out when the darkness sets in, and during the day you will find people chiefly outside some food stores where they queue up with their ration cards for meat and fish."

Although a famine has not yet developed, the shortage of foodstuffs is growing more acute as time goes on. I remember the first six months after the Anschluss in March 1938, when Germans got everything they could lay their hands on until Austria was robbed even of its onions and oranges. Well, those were comparatively good times. Now fresh vegetables are not to be had, nor are butter, fat, and meat. Even for small rations of canned foods and potatoes people have to stand in queues. The undernourishment of children is plainly visible; their bodies will not grow strong despite the most vigorous gymnastic training which the Nazis force them to undergo. Widespread skin diseases among thousands of people are another effect of the ersatz food; often carbuncles are to be found in entire families. The ersatz food does not give any real nourishment; in fact, I heard of many cases where housewives threw away a newly invented artificial egg powder because it made the pastries even more unpalatable than they might have been. Things that are forbidden make people twice as eager to evade the law. Many hoard food and sell it privately.

Or consider the Vienna newspaper which one of my friends was able to bring out with him. Here it lies before me, an edition of the *Neues Wiener Tageblatt* printed on very bad stock, only eight pages in size, with all its former literary standards gone. It contains the official news only and the editorials are, of course, anti-British. Or take the Opera House and the Burgtheater, which perform for the members of the "Strength Through Joy" Organization. Several times the Burgtheater has been forced to cancel its performances because only a few spectators appeared. The radio program is very brief: "It usually begins at eight o'clock and ends at sunset," says one letter. A few blackout concerts, starting in the late afternoon, are announced, but the conductors are obscure men without distinction.



HITLER COMES TO VIENNA. *This unusual candid-camera shot shows police struggling with the people on the occasion of the Nazis' "triumphal march" into Austria in 1938.*

PEOPLE have made their feelings on the war quite clear. In sarcastic and satiric jokes they express their true emotions. One anecdote reports the experience of a lady who, by means of Hitler's conquest, was able to command the finest products of all Europe: she had an evening frock made in Paris, her gloves came from Prague, her furs from Norway, her hats from Holland. And what did she get from Russia? someone asked. From Russia—she got her widow's veil. . . .

This joke has a grim background. Nobody



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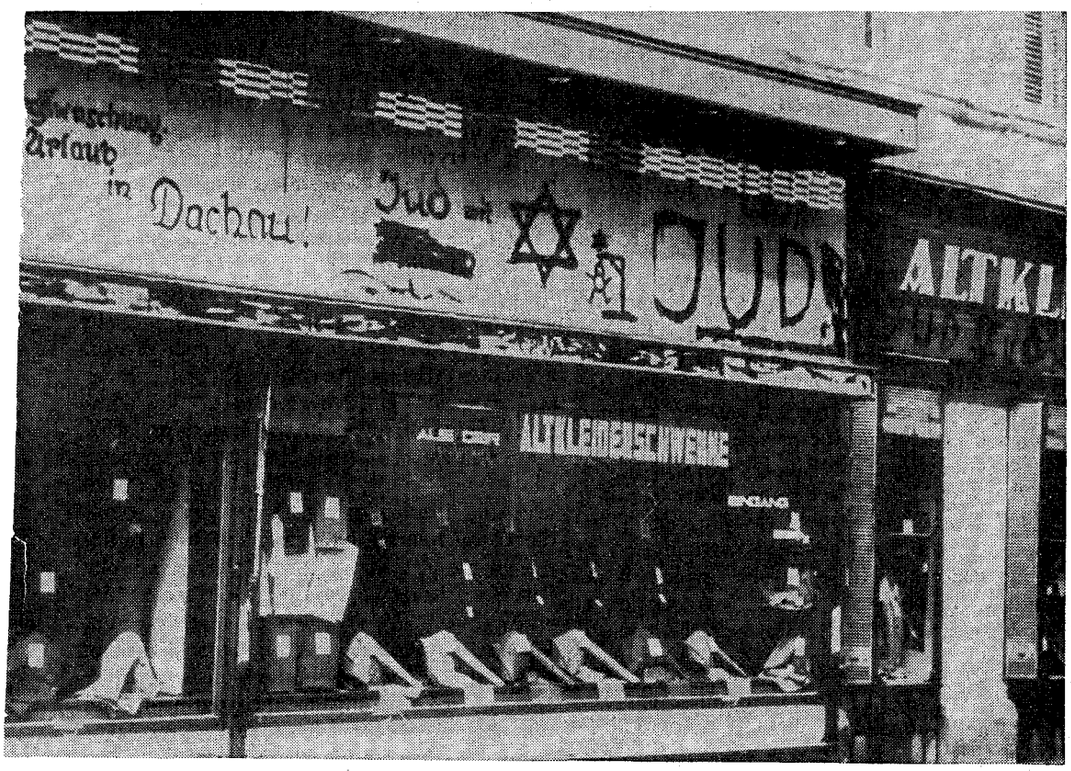
knows exactly how many lives have been sacrificed, but the papers carry innumerable announcements of such deaths. Many of them are not written in the customary manner as ordered by the "Black Corps," the cliche that "the family are proud to have given a son or husband to the Fuehrer." Often as not they have the more personal touch with the political overtone: "We are sorry to announce the passing of **our dear brother.**"

Nowadays, the Austrian people are listening to English and Russian broadcasts more frequently. One old lady was questioned severely by a Gestapo man as to how she dared to listen in on the Moscow station. "Why not?" she said. "My newspaper told me four weeks ago that Hitler was going to broadcast




THE ANTI-SEMITIC TERROR. *A Jewish clothing store in Vienna smeared with Hitler's "Hate the Jew" slogans and symbols. Notice the ominous word "Dachau."*

from the Kremlin. So I am still waiting for his address. . . ." Families who were robbed of their big sets may still own the small *Volks-Radio* which permits them to hear the local stations. Most usually, they have bought additional radio parts and tubes, and hidden them away in places where they wouldn't be found in case of house searches, behind large closets, in chimney places, or beneath the floor. Only the most trusted are allowed to listen to foreign broadcasts because there have been cases in which members of the family accused each other of this "crime" and parents were sometimes denounced by their children.

OPPOSITION to Hitler in Austria does not always show itself in the same way as the Czech, the Polish, the Dutch, the French, the Belgian, the Yugoslav, or the Greek opposition. It has been more difficult to organize because the language is understood by the Nazi overlords. But sabotage is so widespread that no doubt substantial opposition forces are at work. Only a while ago, six Austrian workers were executed in Berlin, accused of slowing down armament production. There have also been mysterious explosions in Upper Austria and in Styria. During the blackout hours the sewer covers in Vienna streets are sometimes opened so that the night warden falls into the hole. A few times police forces have been ordered to garrison the munition works in Simmering. Walls are covered with "V" signs or bear the word *Verschwindet!* (Disappear!) People visiting coffee houses make a habit of asking for coffee, in a loud voice, knowing full well they cannot get it. And even though it is forbidden to wear black dresses after the loss of a son or husband, women dare to wear black veils or mourning bands.

WHEREVER German sports events take place, the onlookers take an unfriendly attitude toward the "guests" and on several occasions the police have been forced to battle with the crowd. Recently, the car of Statthalter Baldur von Schirach, the Nazi youth leader, was smashed at the end of a soccer match at the Hohe Warte-Stadium, whereupon the contests were canceled.

Of a population of 170,000 Jews there are still about 40,000 in Vienna and these are allowed to leave their homes for only one hour a day. Facing mass deportation to Poland, the Jewish problem is one of the saddest. Jews have been forced to move again and again and by now it is customary to find eight to ten people herded into one single room, forbidden, in most cases, to use gas and electric light. Food shops bear the sign: "We sell to Jews only between 5 and 6 PM," at which time almost everything is sold out. Jewish men up to sixty years of age are now forced to work in the war industries, given the most dangerous tasks such as filling bombs with explosives. I have had a letter from a friend who writes: "I am managing a Jewish contingent of eighty men in a military shoe factory and we work to the entire satisfaction of the firm" (meaning, of course, exclusively for the Reich's war machine). Or, I have heard another story: "Seventy out of 200 Jewish workers were taken to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp a short time ago because their foreman accused them falsely of sabotage. The other workers, Christians, promised to take revenge for this when the time was ripe."

EMIGRATION has stopped almost entirely. But the Nazis are not reserving their religious persecution for the Jews alone. It is interesting to note that the Catholics also suffer more and more as time goes on and attendance at religious services is looked on with disfavor by the Nazi Party. The treasures of the Austrian monasteries have been taken piece by piece into Germany; the monks who still are in possession of property are compelled to provide food for the army. There have been stories recently to the effect that the famous old Tassilo Cup had been taken from the monastery in Kremsmunster. This was a treasure of solid gold, dating from the middle ages, and guarded very closely because of its fabulous value. Finally, the power of the cloisters in matters of education is a thing of the past. Nazi Party members show a hateful attitude toward nuns and monks.

One of the most critical aspects of Austrian life revolves around the problem of moral and sexual life. Articles in the *Black Corps* and *Stuermer* urge girls to give birth to illegal children. Young girls who have been in camps of the Hitler Youth Movement together with boys are compelled to follow the "ethics" of their masters. They are taught from their earliest youth that no matter whether married or not, it is glorious to produce a "new generation of heroes." The older generation detests this kind of thing, and fights against it.

Vienna's old splendor and *Gemuetlichkeit* are gone. Our country was the first to fall in Hitler's conquests, but it will not be the last to be reborn. Swastika flags are ordered to be hung out these days when "victories" are achieved. But doubtless many people are doing what one woman did when she had to change the former red-white-red flag into the new one, the recently invented Nazi "victory" rag which is colored all red. "I keep the white strip in my drawer," she told me, "for there may soon be a day when I shall use it again."

RICHARD WIENER.



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# STRATEGY FOR VICTORY

## An Editorial

IN WINSTON CHURCHILL'S dramatic mission to Washington, in Anthony Eden's trip to Moscow, and in the formation of a Far Eastern military council, composed of General Brett for the United States, Chiang Kai-shek for China, and General Wavell for Britain, the strategy of the war is beginning to take shape. These developments are positive and very important: they are the foundation stones for a true world strategy which will, of course, include the smaller nations of Europe and Asia.

All of this comes at a psychological moment, and could not have been possibly delayed. It must be admitted that an unwarranted optimism had been developing among many of us in the past few weeks, an overconfidence arising out of the inspiring Soviet advances in Europe and the substantial sweep which the British forces have made in eastern Libya. The truth is that while these victories have tremendous meaning and take place in the vital theaters of the war, the world situation remains grave.

The fascists have extremely powerful positions from which to threaten very heavy blows, especially at the positions of Britain in the south Pacific and the Mediterranean; such blows, if successful, would instantly react upon all the Americas and Russia, too. As Churchill reminded us, the continent is still producing huge supplies for Hitler's spring and summer campaigns, a fact which the Soviet press has several times noted. And in the Pacific the news is bad, and may be much worse before it gets better. Major battles are impending which will tax all the resources of the anti-Hitler forces.

Very wisely and with commendable frankness, Winston Churchill told his press conference in Washington that he preferred not to venture into the "unattractive jungles" of postwar speculations. The reason is obvious. The war's most crucial phases are still before us.

ON THE SURFACE, it seems that the beginning of the world strategy is developing around the Pacific. This is natural, since all the anti-Axis powers have heavy interests there; and positions such as Singapore are vital to the defense not only of the Dutch East Indies, but of Australia, China, and India. It is natural also since setbacks in the Pacific highlight the year-end events.

How shall these reverses be explained? And what shall be done about them? First, it must be understood that Japan has had initial advantages. The element of surprise enabled her to break the chain of direct American communications via Guam and Wake Island to Manila. The loss of part of our Navy at Pearl Harbor, the fact that sections of the fleet must be kept in the Atlantic until much more of our two-ocean navy is finished, are factors from which Japan temporarily benefits. The enemy has the real edge on us in terms of distances and bases: her naval force operates within 2,000 miles of home, whereas from Honolulu we have literally 4,500 miles to go before reaching sorely threatened Manila, and another 2,000 miles to Singapore. Third, Japan has had relative superiority in the air, and until our air power is marshalled, even such brave defenders as at Lingayen cannot be expected to prevent off-shore enemy landings; without protective air power, ships like the *Prince of Wales* proceed in the waters of the western Pacific with great danger. Fourth, the capitulation of Siam enabled the enemy to move directly through the gates of Malaya—and on top of it all, the Allies still suffer a shortage of effective manpower on the scene of battle. All this must be understood to avoid illusions which may later injure our own and our friends' morale.

And there are still other factors. Some of these are now being investigated by a special commission under Supreme Court Justice Owen Roberts. In London and Singapore the British press is freely discussing certain blunders in Malaya, the nature of which can be imagined from Tillman Durdin's despatch in the New York *Times* for December 20: "The Japanese were able to take over [the strategic island of] Penang virtually as a going concern." In Australia, which is a sensitive mirror of the Pacific, sharp criticism has been directed at the Singapore command.

WHAT IS NECESSARY to overcome these setbacks? First, the conclusion of full scale strategic understandings, alliances among the great powers. Second, a pooling of resources, allocated to the decisive fronts, plus a big drive to realize the productive potentials of all the anti-Axis nations, our own country in particular. Third, a clean-up of the outworn and stubbornly incompetent officials who stand in the way of the war effort. All these measures are under way. Fourth, it is most important that the energies of the millions upon millions of native peoples in Asia be released, especially in the Dutch Indies and India; all the artificially engendered antagonisms among the Asiatic peoples toward embattled China must be eradicated. India in particular could be a tower of strength, not only in manpower and raw materials, but in industrial resources, provided Britain treated the country as a partner instead of a servant and took measures to speed Indian war production. This is necessary for all the peoples of Asia in order to defend their homes and lands, to prevent the usurpation of these countries by Japan.

One of the really encouraging events of the week took place in Malaya, where the imprisoned leaders of the Communist Party were freed, and ten of them took their place in a council of sixty, which represented for the first time the millions of Chinese living in Malaya. More of this, involving not only Communists, but anti-Japanese nationalists of every shade of opinion will be worth as much as planes and battleships to hold Singapore and defend India.

And finally there are military and naval measures, which must of course be left to the High Command. How best to defend the Philippines? How much to send Singapore at all costs? How to dovetail the power of the valiant Dutch and Chinese? These are matters for the combined allied staffs to decide.

BUT REMEMBER ALWAYS that the Pacific is only one theater of the war. Japanese victories there will prolong the struggle, but by itself Japan cannot win the war for the Axis. Our basic maxim remains that the Allies will not lose the war in Asia provided that they win it in the Atlantic and in Europe. Thus, while **everything** necessary must be done in the Pacific, the decisive forces have to be concentrated in the west.

And here two circumstances stand out. First, on taking over command of his armies, Hitler "promised" a big offensive elsewhere, probably developing as a thrust through Spain and down the west coast of French Africa. Second is the fact that the Russian armies are advancing, and threaten to tie down immense German forces in the east. How shall these two factors be combined to the greatest advantage? Might it not be wise to throw over the illusions about Vichy, to forestall the German drive by taking our own initiative in the Atlantic and at Dakar while our Russian friends are pressing Hitler's armies back? Might it not even be best, as Max Werner in the *New Republic* suggests, to choose this moment of Hitler's crisis to throw open a second front on the continent, and thus place Germany in a real nutcracker? As we see it now, such a second front last August would have made it impossible for Hitler to threaten today in the Mediterranean; the war in the Pacific might never have been launched. Perhaps a second front this winter would forestall greater hardships next summer.

Judging from his stirring address to Congress last week, the British Prime Minister does not feel that the time is yet ripe for such an offensive; he foresees that "much ground will be lost which it will be hard and costly to regain" until 1943. Perhaps Churchill is right, but perhaps also he underestimates his own people and his own allies. Perhaps, in his emphasis on the specifically British and American role in the war, he does not reckon with the enormous contribution to rapid victory which the oppressed peoples of Europe and the fighting Chinese and Russians can offer.

At any rate, our job is clear. To provide the means and morale for the earliest possible stroke, to surpass the estimates which the preliminary conferences have set—this is within the scope of men and women of all lands whose resources and will power have only begun to be tapped.



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# NEW MASSES

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WIRE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ASKING IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF EARL BROWDER STOP ONE MILLION SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND AMERICANS INCLUDING LEADING WRITERS ARTISTS EDUCATORS TRADE UNIONISTS SCIENTISTS MINISTERS ETC HAVE ASKED BROWDERS FREEDOM STOP HE HAS ALREADY SERVED NINE MONTHS WHICH IS MORE THAN IS USUALLY GIVEN FOR SIMILAR CHARGE STOP AMERICAS FIGHT FOR VICTORY OVER HITLERISM THROUGHOUT WORLD NEEDS EARL BROWDER STOP WIRE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT TODAY

THE EDITORS

## The St. Pierre Episode

THERE is something really ironical in the fact that the Free French government decided on a bit of its own strategy in the very week that the strategy of the war as a whole was being decided in Chungking, Washington, and Moscow. The occupation of St. Pierre and Miquelon, two obscure islands off the coast of Newfoundland, by Free French forces serves to point a moral: it is that the strategy and interests of the smaller powers must be coordinated with the strategy and interests of the larger powers. And the moral also is that the strategy of the larger powers must be clarified beyond doubt. Otherwise, millions of honest Canadians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Americans are going to be thrown into considerable confusion.

What happened was this: only a week after the United States, in a special agreement by our Navy, decided to respect the neutrality of Martinique and Guadaloupe, French islands in the Caribbean, Vice Admiral Muselier of the Free French government steamed into St. Pierre and Miquelon. The population, according to reports, rallied very quickly, more than 98 percent joining with the anti-Vichy forces. The Vichy governor and pro-Vichy officials were arrested. The powerful St. Pierre radio, which had been broadcasting seditious propaganda to French Canada and may have been helping Nazi submarines with information, was silenced. On the next day, our State Department criticized this action as "arbitrary." Vichy, of course, quickly expressed its thanks for the action. The Free French were flabbergasted. De Gaulle protested. And as of this writing, the issues were being negotiated to the "satisfaction of all parties concerned," whatever that can be.

It is understandable that the State Department should be irritated. It is trying to carry through a consistent policy toward Vichy, a policy which calls for respecting the territorial integrity of the French empire. The theory is that such a policy will delay, or prevent, the full collaboration of Vichy with the Axis, especially as regards the French fleet and French bases in Africa. Apparently the Free French had proposed this expedition to St. Pierre and Miquelon before, and had been turned down. By forcing the issue, the Free French were clearly challenging the whole basis and theory of the State Department's present policy toward Vichy.

But if there is to be a world strategy against the Axis, perhaps we have something to learn from the Free French, even if their unilateral action conflicts with the consistency of our own strategy. After all, de Gaulle's government is not an upstart affair; it has been recognized by Britain and the Soviet Union as the legitimate government of France. And while the United States has not accorded de Gaulle recognition, Mr. Roosevelt did declare only five weeks ago that the defense of Free France's territories was in the interest of the United States and deserved lend-lease aid.

The incident therefore raises larger issues. The issue is whether our policy toward Vichy is really a wise one. The issue is whether this policy toward Vichy may not actually contradict our basic anti-Axis strategy, whether the authors of this policy are not men like Bullitt, who have been so often discredited by the course of events. Whatever happens, this incident serves to demonstrate, first, that the French citizens are anti-Vichy; second, that their interests must be fitted into the larger world strategy, and third, that America's policy toward the Vichymen badly needs clarification.

Stevenson

*Soviet Scenes, 1942*

## In the Name of "Economy"

SENATOR BYRD of Virginia offers a novel plan to help defeat the Axis: starve a few million Americans, deprive many others of their clothing, and abolish a number of government projects which train for civilian defense. Mr. Byrd is out to "save" $1,301,075,000 in government funds by killing off the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the Farm Security Administration, besides drastically cutting the WPA and food stamp plan. These proposals are made by the Virginian aristocrat as head of a joint congressional committee on "economy"—an innocent, indeed laudable, sounding word which has been abused before by tax dodgers and enemies of social progress. Mr. Byrd, contrary to his intention, does not make it seem any more laudable by attempting to define it in the context of his reactionary proposal as a necessity of war. For one thing, it will be remembered that the senator voted against revision of the Neutrality Act while he was demanding legislation to hamper labor in its vital function of wartime production. Similarly, he would now hamper, if not cripple, the vital force of civilian morale and physical strength necessary for war work.

As Senator La Follette of Wisconsin, a member of the joint committee, pointed out in his minority report: "This action would be unwise in peace but, confronted with total war which may be of long duration, I regard it as a grave error in policy." Just as one example of what this "economy" measure would do to America's poorest third of the population, it was stated by Roy F. Hendrickson, Federal Agricultural Marketing Administrator, that the proposed agricultural cuts might result in "the complete elimination" of funds for relief milk, lunches for school children, and surplus commodities purchased through the food stamp plan. Actually those government expenditures which the Virginian would abolish literally stand between life and death for an important segment of America's population.

Certainly there must be no waste in government expenditures; certainly the people are ready to make any sacrifice necessary to victory. But the sacrifices urged by Senator Byrd are not only undemocratic and harmful to the war effort—they are illogical, unneces-



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sary, and in some cases will even result in the indirect spending of more money than is saved. The senator and his friends could do far more for economy by taking a little interest in price control than by lying awake nights trying to find ways of breaking up socially necessary projects which they have always hated.

### *Enemies of Unity*

IT TAKES all sorts of people to make up an effective fifth column. Not the least of Hitler's and Hirohito's American agents are those who, while traveling under the false passport of loyalty to America and its war against the Axis, devote themselves to disrupting national unity and attacking one of this country's chief allies. We have in mind the bill which Rep. Martin Dies recently sneaked through the House at a time when five-sixths of its members were absent. The bill links the Communist Party with the Nazi bund and requires the registration of the membership of both. We also have in mind the all-out war against labor which Westbrook Pegler is waging. And we have in mind the anti-Soviet, anti-Communist falsehoods of such journalistic Ku Kluxers as Eugene Lyons and Max Eastman.

In a letter to the New York *Times* last Sunday Eastman declares that "the American Communist Party members, if not their stooges, dupes and fellow travelers, do constitute a 'seditious conspiracy.'" The Communists, he insists, are the real danger to this country and should be denied free speech. This argument will be recognized, of course, as straight from Berlin and Tokyo. That Eastman offers it wrapped in the Stars and Stripes only serves to emphasize its subversive origins.

The occasion for Eastman's blast is the recent conviction in Minneapolis of a group of Trotskyite leaders for seditious conspiracy. Eastman, a former Trotskyite himself, objects in his letter to the *Times* to the prosecution and conviction of his comrades-in-fifth-columning. There is certainly something to criticize in the government procedure in the trial of the Trotskyites. The Department of Justice, instead of frankly trying the Trotskyites as a fascist group, sought, on the contrary, to depict them as "radicals" and allowed them to pose as champions of socialism. By adopting this tactic and prosecuting the Trotskyites under the reactionary Smith act, the Justice Department set a precedent which might be used for anti-democratic purposes.

Eastman's attack on the government is, however, on far different grounds. Its meaning is indicated by his statement that "there is no seditious conspiracy in Minneapolis, but there is a seditious conspiracy in New York and Washington." This is the Dies committee line. By refusing to pass the Dies bill, the Senate can defeat the Dies-Eastman attempt to sap and disrupt the united effort essential for victory over the nation's enemies.

## Hitler's "American" Friends

THE arrest of Laura Ingalls, woman flier, for failing to register as a paid German agent turns the spotlight on every appeaser and pro-fascist, including those who between December 7 and 8 underwent a sudden conversion. For though the technical charge is failing to register, the real charge is that Miss Ingalls' services as a speaker and propagandist for the America First Committee were bought and paid for by the Nazis. Thus the arrest provides the first legal evidence of a direct link between America First and that gangster government which is the deadliest enemy of America. It confirms the revelations made by John L. Spivak in NEW MASSES.

Clearly, more is involved here than the treasonable activity of a single individual. Miss Ingalls carried on her fifth column work as part of a nationwide organization whose leaders, whether or not they were paid by Hitler, did his work by attempting to divide and confuse the American people and hamstring national defense. The most successful fifth columnists in every country have not been the avowed Nazis, but those Petains and Lindberghs who, while posing as patriots and peace advocates, have sought to engulf their own peoples in that hideous "wave of the future" which obliterates all freedom and decency, nationhood itself. Shall we permit these men, who up to the eve of December 7, were engaged in thrusting Hitler's and Hirohito's knife into the back of America, to secure a cheap absolution in the name of national unity? These were the wreckers of national unity yesterday; they strike at its foundations today.

One of Hitler's favorite tricks is to sow suspicion and distrust among his opponents and thereby prevent them from uniting against him. This is the tactic now being followed in this country by the "ex"-appeasers. For instance, the New York *Daily News*—which only four days before the Japanese attack, broadcast, together with the Chicago *Tribune,* the secret plans of the War and Navy Departments—wrote editorially on December 23: "Of course, if the Russian victories carry through to the ultimate smashing of the German military power, we face the prospect that Russia will insist on communizing Europe." The *Daily News* left the i's undotted and the t's uncrossed, but no one will fail to get the meaning: don't trust Russia; don't send lend-lease aid to the Soviet front; don't try to smash Hitler. Which adds up to: don't fight for the victory of America over its enemies.

Similarly, George Sokolsky, listed as a Japanese propagandist by the *China Weekly Review* in 1939, who on December 2 wrote that "the Japanese want no war with us," did his bit for Hirohitler on December 22 with a foul assortment of innuendos about a secret Soviet-Japanese "deal."

That veteran tycoon of fascism, William Randolph Hearst, does the job a little more subtly (the old fox has learned). No one shouts more lustily than he for victory over Japan. But in his column on December 19 he insinuated the idea that "England's fleets are more than strong enough" to look after her interests in the Atlantic; that "Russia's armies are more than strong enough" to take care of Hitler and his European allies; that "Our American work is in the Pacific," and that "There now is the main theater of war." In other words, Hearst suggests that we walk into the trap which Hitler prepared for us in the Japanese assault; that we cut ourselves off from our two major allies, and instead of fighting this as a unified world war whose decisive front is in Europe, that we wage it as a limited war against Japan alone, thereby risking the triumph of Hitlerism, which would mean the doom of America no matter what happened in the Far East.

This same appeaser strategy was also advocated by Norman Thomas in a radio speech in which he blamed the American government for the Japanese assault. This Quisling Socialist found it "to our advantage to limit our involvement as much as possible, and to avoid great expeditionary forces in Europe, Asia, and Africa. It was with satisfaction that I heard President Roosevelt ask only for a declaration of war against Japan." (*Socialist Call,* December 20.)

The most blatant of the appeasers and fifth columnists was and is Father Coughlin. With the outbreak of hostilities his weekly *Social Justice* resorted to a species of doubletalk which cannot even be called a thin disguise for the Nazi and Japanese propaganda which it has carried on for years. If the December 22 issue of *Social Justice,* with its denunciations of Britain, Russia, and the United States, its apologies for Japan and Germany, is not clearly treasonable, then the word has lost all meaning. Our government has closed down the organ of the Nazi Bund, the *Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter.* Yet its English language affiliate, published in Royal Oak, Mich., and edited by a pagan mountebank in clerical garb, is allowed to spew its poison unmolested.

America cannot be too vigilant against these fifth columnists. Our cause is too great to leave any room for those who conspire against the nation. Softness to traitors is itself a form of surrender. That is the bitter lesson France has taught. Laura Ingalls is not the only Hitlerite with an American name. Now is the time to smoke them out.



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# THOSE WHO BOUGHT HITLER

***Fritz Thyssen's apologia unintentionally indicts himself as one of those who helped bring the dictator to power. The real reason for his break with the Nazis.***

I PAID HITLER, *by Fritz Thyssen. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.75.*

THE contention that the Hitler regime was raised to power by German plutocracy is confirmed for the first time in this book by one of the chief financial backers of the Nazi Party. Thyssen's testimony is important; it definitely dispels the notion that Hitler's party was a "young anti-capitalist movement against the plutocratic powers."

German predatory interests have been creating their political instruments and organizations ever since the end of the last century. For example, the big banker Hansemann's brother-in-law, Kusserow, directed the Colonial Society which carried on mass agitation for the acquisition of colonies. In 1898 Krupp put his henchman Schweinburg at the head of the German Naval Association, an outfit whose chauvinist propaganda undoubtedly intensified the hostility between England and Germany, also bringing huge orders for Krupp's Works and his "Germania" shipyards in Kiel.

In addition to these two societies, there was the Pan-German Union, which acquired a world notoriety as the representative of the most rabidly annexationist wing of the German bourgeoisie. Its founder and chairman, Counsellor Class, tells us in his memoirs published a few years ago that the financial backers of the Pan-German Union were Kirdorf, Stinnes, Hugenberg (at that time general manager of Krupp), Reusch, and Borsig, that is, the owners and directors of the coal mines and steel mills of the Ruhr.

Kirdorf, head of the German coal syndicate, had joined the Nazis body and soul, but especially with his pocketbook, as far back as 1923. Stinnes placed his bets on the Hitler party also, and gave it money. Hugenberg, who had the job of distributing the slush fund for the predatory interests, gave twenty percent to the Nazis, according to Thyssen, during the last years of the Weimar Republic. As chairman of the German Nationalist Party, Hugenberg definitely paved the road to power for the Nazis, taking a personal part as Minister of Economics in the years 1933-34. Reusch, the general manager of the "Good Hope" mills, one of the six big German heavy industry trusts, supports the Nazis today just as he supported the Pan-Germans a generation before. That Krupp himself is intimately bound up with Hitler and the Nazi regime is one of Thyssen's most striking revelations.

According to his own report, Thyssen was one of the powers behind the Pan-Germans, and financed the Hitler-Ludendorff putsch of 1923 to the tune of 100,000 gold marks, a sum which sounds rather modest but which was actually a formidable amount in view of the inflation prevailing at the time. One million marks were given annually to the Nazi Party by the coal and steel barons, of which Thyssen was one. Voluntary contributions each year by the Employers Association accounted for another 2,000,000.

This shows that *the leading German robber barons who financed those organizations whose annexationist policies led to the first world war, are identical with the big financial backers of the Nazi Party today.*

These German big-wigs gave the Nazi Party two commissions to execute. The first was of an inner political nature: destruction of the German labor movement and the democracy which gave the labor movement a legal basis for its struggle. The second was to be realized by armament and war, something to which the Pan-German Union had already aspired: incorporation of all European areas inhabited by German-speaking elements, annexation of territories important to Germany as sources of raw material and markets, the elevation of Germany as the dominant power on the globe. Hitler has fulfilled the first commission. He is now attempting to carry out the second.

Since the Nazi leaders are revealed as the executors of the will of big German capital, why has the big capitalist Thyssen broken with them? According to his book, Thyssen was repelled by Hitler's policies, and turned into a St. George of race equality, freedom of opinion, and pacifism. Nothing is further from the truth. The fact is that this man did not hesitate to profit from the expropriation of the Jews. Many large Jewish concerns were piratically taken over by Hitler's "Aryan" companies in which Thyssen was financially interested. For example, after the Jewish owners of the Essen banking firm of Simon Hirschland were thrown out, he joined its board of directors. As a board member of the Siemens Concern, he did not utter a word of protest when big electrical works belonging to Jewish owners were expropriated. As far as is known, Thyssen did not renounce the additional royalties acquired in this manner.

The author spares no words of revulsion at Hitler's butchery on June 30, 1934. But there is something peculiar about this indignation, for although he was in Argentina in 1935 and 1937, he neglected every favorable opportunity to protest. In this respect, Herr Thyssen is like his friend Rauschning, the former president of the Danzig Senate, now in the United States. Rauschning also waited for the outbreak of the war before exposing Goering's complicity in the Reichstag fire, a fact that he had known for *six* years!

Anyone who carefully follows the literature of these Nazi renegades, whether they be Otto Strasser, Rauschning, or Thyssen, will notice immediately that they are of the very flesh of Nazism, arch-reactionary monarchists like Rauschning or anti-Semitic, feudal-minded politicians like Otto Strasser. "I consider it impossible to let working people participate in business," writes Thyssen, who twenty years ago demanded the re-introduction of the ten-hour day which now exists in Germany.

It was not, therefore, a matter of democratic principle which led to the break with Hitler. There were other reasons. Some he mentions, some he conceals. In the three documents consummating Thyssen's break—a telegram and letter to Goering, and a letter to Hitler—Thyssen emphasizes *the signing of the German-Soviet pact of Aug. 23, 1939, as the cause that led him to break.* The pact, he maintained, would make Germany dependent upon Russia and drive it into the arms of Communism.

"I had always warned industrialists, as well as military circles, against a rapprochement with Communist Russia. For me, this regime was the enemy of Germany and of Europe as a whole. The pact with Moscow seemed abominable, because it was an unnatural alliance with the enemy of Western civilization."

This is exactly the reason advanced by Hitler today for his aggression against the Soviet Union, which only reemphasizes the community of ideas between Thyssen and the Lord of the Third Reich.

One may ask whether Thyssen had not been informed in advance that this pact was not honestly intended, that Hitler signed it only for tactical reasons and with the intention of violating it later. It is probable that Thyssen had not been informed. For, on the eve of the outbreak of war, the relations between him and the fuehrer were exceptionally strained. The reason, which Thyssen suppresses in his book, goes back to the annexation of Austria in 1938. At that time, a grim struggle developed behind the scenes for the control of the Alpine Mining Corp. This company owns the large ore deposits in the Austrian province of Styria with an annual production of 4,000,000 tons. After a long struggle with Italian capital, the steel trust under Thyssen's leadership had seized the Alpine Mining Corp.

After the occupation of Austria, Goering's company demanded the enterprise for itself. Thyssen resisted. But Goering was no longer



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the indigent salesman who, eight years before, had still permitted Thyssen to pay the rent for his Berlin residence. The Austrian ore deposits were taken back from the steel trust and became a bulwark of Goering's company. It was such material motives which gave rise to the hostility that broke into the open with the signature of the German-Soviet pact.

THE FACT that a powerful German monopolist has broken with the Third Reich will lead only the uninformed to judge the Third Reich as a young, revolutionary "have-not," struggling against plutocratic powers. *The plutocratic powers in Germany have never been as strong as they are today:* the banks and factories, the mines and ships and natural resources are the private property of a few thousand people. These people have been enriched still further by Hitler's "re-privatization" of numerous banks, industrial plants, and steamship lines. And no one profited more from this practice than Fritz Thyssen, who got back the money he had invested in the Nazi Party with interest. He was exempted from taxes in 1934 and received several million steel trust shares from the Reich in 1936.

The constantly increasing profits of production are only one side of the picture. Wherever Hitler's armies set foot, they are followed by German millionaires. German monopolists have appropriated the Rumanian oil industry, banks, and insurance companies. Bulgaria's banks as well as its agriculture are under control. The chief branches of Czechoslovak industry are the domain of Goering's Concern as well as of the Deutsche and Dresden banks. These two largest private banks of Germany have entrenched themselves in Budapest, Sofia, Athens, Bucharest and Pressburg, Belgrade, Agram, Krakow, Lemburg, Kovno, Tallinn and Riga, Amsterdam, Strassburg and Luxemburg, and have established financial domination in all these places.

General Manager Steinbrinck, of the heavy industry Flick Corp., rules Belgian economy as civil commissioner, while control of the Lorraine ore and smelting foundries has been entrusted to the Saar industrialist Roechling who has also annexed a number of enterprises in France and Polish Upper Silesia.

Hitler's present Minister of Economics, Kurt Schmitt, chairman of the board of directors of the General Electric Corp. and big German insurance companies, opened seventeen new agencies of these German insurance companies in France, twenty in Holland, and sixteen in Belgium, stealing two-thirds of the portfolios of the British companies in France (the remaining third is left to the Italians). Recently he was elected president of the newly organized "European Insurance Cartel."

While Hitler's finance capital thus makes huge war profits, at the same time it receives powerful government support against the workers. Despite the considerable rise in prices, State Secretary Koerner has openly declared to the workers: "The principle of stable wages must be preserved. An increase in wages is useless and economically dangerous."

To those middle class people in this country who were inclined to give credence to the idea that the Nazis are "saviors of the middle class," one cannot describe too graphically how Hitler's monopoly dictatorship has destroyed Germany's middle classes. Out of 1,600,000 independent shops which existed up to the beginning of the Hitler dictatorship, 600,000 had been closed by the beginning of this year. The government commissions organized a mass destruction of small independent livelihoods in order to force more workers into the war industries owned by Krupp, the Goering Concern, and the Steel Trust. And this policy of throwing the independent artisans out of their shops is now being intensified.

It is true that changes have taken place within the leading circles of German finance capital: one group of Nazi Party chiefs has itself become a part of the top monopoly circles. Goering's Concern has already outstripped the steel and chemical trusts. As a large stockholder in the Eher publishing firm, Hitler controls daily newspapers with a circulation of 16,500,000, making him a multi-millionaire. Ley, enriched by stolen trade union funds, is building up a concern on a smaller basis. The Nazi agents, begotten by German plutocracy, are utilizing their government power in order to become as rich as their progenitors. The bodyguards and flunkeys of yesterday have become the head clerks and business partners of today; but both are plutocrats, the old as well as the new millionaires.

In the course of this cut-throat process, Herr Thyssen became the victim of the tiger-eat-tiger competitive struggle. He is not an anti-fascist but a dislodged creditor of fascism. He gives himself away in his proposed war aim at the end of his book: the division of the Reich into a West German and East German monarchy. Monarchy, because "the German people have proved that they are incapable of adjusting themselves to democratic institutions," and this from the same man who contributed most to the disruption of German democratic institutions. Division of the Reich, because in an independent West Germany the real monarch would be Thyssen, who would like to resume his rule as master of hundreds of thousands of West German miners and metal workers. ANDREAS NIEBUHR.

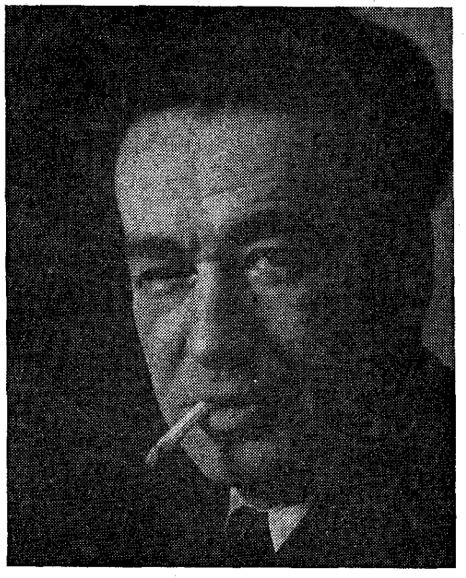
# THE MASTER REPORTER

## *The odyssey of Egon Erwin Kisch, whose writings topped the heap burned by Goebbels' inquisitors. A review by Samuel Sillen.*

SENSATION FAIR, *by Egon Erwin Kisch. Modern Age. $2.75.*

EGON KISCH has often been advised to stop calling himself a reporter and to stop labeling his work "reportage." Leave out dates and names, critics have suggested. Use "short story" or "novelette" as a subtitle for your writings. "Then you will be judged from a literary standpoint as a man of creative talent."

Had Kisch followed this advice his work would perhaps be more widely known in this country. His twenty-five books and countless periodical pieces have earned him a tremendous reputation not only in his native Czechoslovakia but throughout Europe. Yet American publishers have almost entirely neglected him, and his influence has been felt by the reading public only indirectly, through the scores of writers whom he taught to walk. "Why the man has written nothing but what he has seen," exclaims the philistine. He's not a novelist or playwright or political Nostradamus. How shall we *advertise* him?



*Egon Erwin Kisch*

Henri Barbusse, who knew a great writer when he read him, once gave the answer. "Kisch," he wrote, "is one of those who from 'reporting,' from the art of direct observation, has fashioned pictures and frescoes based on the wide panorama of life—a literary genre of the first rank." The important thing to note in Barbusse's description of this literary genre is that the writer only starts out with the materials of ordinary reporting; he does not end there. Out of these materials he *fashions* his work. And this fashioning implies an artistic process of a specific character.

I daresay that this process has been largely misunderstood by American writers of reportage, even among those who believe that they are following in Kisch's footsteps. While *Sensation Fair* is in some respects not typical of the author's method—it is an autobiographical record of his first thirty years—the book illuminates those qualities which distinguish all his work. And the over-all impression is that one is in the presence of a work of art. There is a third dimension



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here which one misses in "documentary" or "naturalistic" reporting. The facts have become transformed by the imagination, personality, and understanding of the writer. A delightfully sly sense of humor plays over the pages. The "pictures and frescoes" have a design, despite the effortless and seemingly wayward manner in the Schweik tradition.

Kisch is a superb teller of tales, and it is characteristic that his "autobiography" should consist mainly of stories about other people. As a reporter for Czech and German newspapers he met all sorts of incredible people in all sorts of incredible situations. One day, for example, he called up the Prague Home for Wayward Girls and asked the Mother Superior if he could visit the institution for the purposes of an article that he planned. After much debate by the prayerful patrons of the institution, the representative of the press was granted permission to pay a visit. The atmosphere was stuffy. All the dignity and moral rectitude of the world was concentrated in the reception ceremonies. This was the first press interview on record. When the "wayward girls" greeted Egon, the police reporter who had got around, with kisses and embraces, he was deeply touched. As he recalls, and as we have no reason to disbelieve, the board of trustees was even more deeply touched. But if this story, as Kisch tells it, ties one into knots of laughter, that is not the whole of it. For in 1933 the Nazis voted a thousand-mark prize for the story "which would best express the native wit and humor of the North German Seaboard." The winner was the "humorist" of the Hamburger *Fremdenblatt,* Hanns ut Hamm. The story: Magdalene Home. The author: Egon Kisch (definitely not of the North Seaboard). When the *Schwarze Korps,* organ of the blackshirted Elite Guard, discovered the actual source, it boiled over, not at the idea of plagiarism as such, but at the "shameless smuggling of a typically foreign strain of thought into our National Socialist folkways." And, as Kisch puts it, "After such a pitiful end to their vaunted prize contest, all efforts to create a Nazi literature were abandoned."

Then there is the remarkable story of Colonel Redl, involving an internationally famous espionage case. How Kisch scooped the world through information unwittingly provided by the right end of his football team (the same team on which Eda Benes was halfback) makes a most delightful and revealing narrative. The story of Tony Gallows and how she got to heaven, the episode with the Siamese Twins, the famous altercation between grandmother Kisch and Egon in which it was incontrovertibly established that the capital of Salzburg is Salzburg, and scores of other anecdotes give *Sensation Fair* the character of an inexhaustible mine of significant anecdote. It is hardly any wonder that Kisch has been just about the most widely plagiarized writer in the world. He has strewn the path of his fellow authors with irresistible temptations.

But it is not only the stories as such that give the book its unique flavor. Kisch's wise observations on everything from Dante to modern theories of criminology are always fresh and stimulating. He is eternally curious about life. One feels in the presence of this book, as in the presence of the author himself, a richness and zest that cannot be defeated in the most difficult conditions of exile. His work radiates a deep love for humanity and a deep hatred for everything that seeks to crush humanity. In his sparkling diction, at once considered and colloquial, in his highly individual style, which Guy Endore's translation so beautifully communicates, one sees reflected the buoyancy and seriousness which are equally basic to his character. This unswerving enemy of fascism will one day soon —as soon as the united effort of mankind succeeds—return to Prague. And many of us Americans look forward to the day when we can come to Prague and listen to him, as he once listened to Methodius, reciting his "ballads of fact." We shall listen with the same awe and appreciation. And with even greater love.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

## Jawaharlal Nehru

TOWARD FREEDOM, The Autobiography of Jawaharlal Nehru. *The John Day Co. $4.*

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU as an individual parallels the complexity of his country. He also reflects the strength and hope of his people. He has taken part in every major struggle for the political, social, and cultural advancement of India today. Prison is as familiar to him as his own home.

But Nehru's autobiography is much more than a record of Indian politics. It is a careful self-portrait of a man who knows that his character, weakness, and fortitude have more than a restricted personal importance. Neither vain nor falsely modest, Nehru speaks of his

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accomplishments and failings with candor because he sees them duplicated in the failures and successes of the liberation movement.

Nehru's description of his early home life and the conversion of his father to a radical point of view is at once charming and deeply serious. For the father, Motilal, a successful lawyer influenced by his son, became one of the many great Indian patriots imprisoned for their service to the people. A similar warmth and understanding appear in his relations with his wife, Kamala, who is now dead. In 1931 she was arrested following Nehru's own detention in connection with a "No Tax" campaign in the United Provinces. She managed to send him a message: "I am happy beyond measure to follow in the footsteps of my husband." Nehru remarks tenderly, "Probably she would not have said just that if she had thought over the matter, for she considered herself a champion of woman's rights against the tyranny of man!"

When Nehru returned from a trip to Europe in 1927 he brought with him the socialist ideas which were to guide him in his future political actions. He had attended the Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities and had been influenced by the uncompromising stand of the Communists as contrasted with the vacillation of the Social Democrats.

While not a Communist, Nehru has gained tremendously from his contact with Communist theory. It has helped him to appraise correctly many puzzling features in Indian life and to combat reactionary forces working within the framework of the national movement. Nehru has been the most outspoken enemy of communalism, or religious separatism, which seeks to divide Moslem from Hindu India in the interests of imperialism and feudalism. His advanced stand has brought him into reluctant but inevitable opposition to Gandhi. His personal feeling for Gandhi and his recognition of the latter's qualities as a leader do not blind Nehru to Gandhi's inflexibly religious, petty bourgeois outlook. He has, however, not stood up against Gandhi as strongly as he might, possibly from an all-too-human affection.

Nehru's view of international developments has been nearly always right. He has often paid tribute to Soviet democracy, notably in his presidential address to the Lucknow National Congress in 1936. He was a consistent enemy of appeasement and spoke angrily against the Chamberlain betrayal of Europe to fascism. Though his narrative does not include the most recent events, one is left in no doubt as to what his stand would be today.

Nehru, who was arrested again in August 1940, has just been released from jail. His continued imprisonment at a time when the British people need the support of the democratic forces in India as never before, was a paradox which was not lost upon the masses of Britain. In a statement, insisting upon a more vigorous prosecution of the war against the common enemy, Hitlerism, the National Committee of the People's Convention urged that the "just demands" of the people of India and the colonies be met and all political prisoners be released.

That demand has been answered in part by the freeing of Nehru.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT.

## Outside Looking In

INSIDE LATIN AMERICA, *by John Gunther. Harper & Bros. $3.50.*

LIKE its predecessors, *Inside Europe* and *Inside Asia,* this volume is a glib piece of history-through-personality. Anecdotes take first place; hasty personal observations are second; social and economic background run third. Inaccuracies and sloppy generalizations are plentiful; and one finds enough obvious errors to make Mr. Gunther's stories suspect unless confirmed by other sources. But once all this is said, it must also be admitted that the sketches about our neighbors to the south are very vivid and not usually unfair; at least the author is free from the wild prejudices of a man like Carleton Beals, and he pictures the immediate political patterns of the Latin American republics in greater detail than the other recent popular surveys. When Mr. Gunther is most seriously inaccurate, as, for example, in misrepresenting the circumstances of Luis Carlos Prestes' latest "trial," it seems to be less out of malice, and more because of a reluctance to spoil a picturesque story by inquiring too closely into the truth.

Most Latin Americans who have read this book have not taken to it very kindly. Negative reactions have appeared in the Latin American press and in the New York Spanish daily, *La Prensa.* One of the grievances of our Latin American friends concerns Mr. Gunther's method of work. He spent many years as a correspondent on the continent before writing *Inside Europe;* likewise with his volume on Asia; but he presumed to write *Inside Latin America* after only a few months of an airplane tour, hopping from capital to capital of the twenty republics. True enough, his visits were conscientious. He visited them all. And as he states in his preface, he covered 18,938 miles by air. He chatted with an imposing number of presidents and foreign ministers, and he seems certainly to have read a half dozen standard works in English about the hemisphere. One must credit his ability to compose such a volume, in many ways so much more informative than those of writers with a longer experience. Still, as one Bolivian journalist suggests, it should have been entitled *Outside Latin America,* or *Latin America From the Outside Looking In.*

On the other hand, many other comments from Latin America are less justified. It does no service to the Good Neighbor policy to pretend that all Latin American dignitaries are democrats and honest public servants. If the present government of Peru, for example, is furious with Gunther for his description of the way it keeps itself in


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power, that is perhaps a credit to Gunther. If anything, he is often too kindly toward the unsavory *caudillos* who still maintain their position in many countries; a real criticism of his book lies in the fact that it does not expand on the role that the Good Neighbor policy still has to play, in mobilizing the native democratic and anti-fascist sentiments of our brother peoples in the fight against those native dictators who are in effect Hitler's reserves in the hemisphere.

It must also be realized that the citizens of Argentina, Chile, or Colombia have had their fill of good will missions; what they appreciate most in the United States are the real measures of economic assistance and mutual protection which Mr. Roosevelt is offering them. But they will be suspicious of anyone who makes sweeping generalizations after a few weeks' tour, much in the same way as Americans used to enjoy a comic character in the form of the European lecturer, who "understood" and "explained" the United States after a visit of a single month.

Gunther is the most skillful journalist who has tried this kind of thing but the least informed; that is why his book arouses criticism among our neighbors and will hardly help Americans to understand the legitimate base of this criticism. What is needed is a little genuine reciprocity, a mutual respect among all the peoples of the hemisphere for the culture, history, and real political background of their respective countries. In so far as explaining one-half of the hemisphere to the other, perhaps the best volume is still that sober textbook by Mary Williams, *The People and Politics of Latin America.*

FRANK T. BAKER.

## The Black Belt

DEEP SOUTH, *by Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, Mary R. Gardner. University of Chicago Press. $4.50.*

HERE is the Black Belt's *Middletown.* After the plethora of regional works by "inside" impressionists who skim over an area, a book by trained sociologists who actually lived for two years in the locale they analyze is indeed welcome. Moreover, the investigators themselves, like the folk of the anonymous southern town they studied, are both Negro and white, male and female, thus giving them uninhibited entry within the caste and sex (but not class) divisions of the society examined. And the subject matter is as fresh as the method of its collection.

Yet it must be remarked that at some points the authors put forth propositions of a very questionable nature. Thus, they write: "It seems useless, and it is certainly unscientific, to postulate that either the economic system or the social organization, per se, is a first cause." Were the postulating of a first, or basic, cause useless, disciplines would lose much of their value, since, under such circumstances, methods of therapy—both corrective and preventive—could be discovered only accidentally. And if postulating basic causes, or, in other words, formulating fundamental generalizations, is unscientific, then a geologist needs be but a gravel sorter, an astronomer but a star gazer, an historian but a logographer, and a sociologist but a census taker.

Actually, however, the authors themselves forget their own remark by the time they have written another page, and place the "technical system which is organized and controlled by the economic system" at the base, and rear upon it the social organization and logics of the community. And a few pages farther on they accurately remark that the peculiar feature of the particular society, its caste structure, "had its origin, historically, in the plantation economy."

And, at another place, the authors comment upon the alleged "willingness" with which the victims of this plantation economy and its caste and class structures remain where they are. Their "willingness" approximates that with which the waiting Man from Kansas remains in Atlanta. But, once again, the actual content of the book devastates this glib remark of its creators.

For it is precisely here that the work's truly great value lies. America's plantation economy and society, the whims, values, and organizations of each of its classes and castes, and the devilishly efficient system of exploitation, are brought to life. You can't get land, for the bosses own it all, water is scarce for the bosses don't bother digging wells, food is lacking for the bosses have fenced in the pasture land, and money is unavailable, and moving is almost impossible, for without money you're in debt, and a man in debt *dare* not move. The book is filled with close-up, living evidences of tension, resentment, hostility, and outright rebellion on the part of the poor-Negro and -white—and with the methods of control devised and maintained by the wealthy—again Negro and white, though here, of course, largely the latter.

Readers of Richard Wright's recent magnificent book will remember the folk saying derived from decades of deception and brutality:

*Nought to nought, an' figguh to figguh*
*All fuh de white man, an' none fuh de nigguh*

Well, the authors tell us that a new jingle is coming from increasing thousands of southern lips today, and it goes:

*Nought to nought, an' fo' to fo'*
*All fuh de rich, an' none fuh de po'*

When enough southern people learn those lines, Cox of Georgia, and Smith of Virginia, and Dies of Texas will have to follow Harvey of Queens into exile, and move mighty fast.

This reviewer knows of no other single book in which so detailed and graphic, so rounded and accurate a picture of the Bourbon caste-class system is given. The work is a major contribution toward the understanding of the American scene.

HERBERT APTHEKER.



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## Balkan Backdrop

BLACK LAMB AND GREY FALCON, *by Rebecca West, two volumes. Viking Press. $7.50.*

REBECCA WEST did not know anything about Yugoslavia until Oct. 9, 1934. On the day that King Alexander was assassinated at Marseilles, Miss West was in a hospital in London after a serious operation, and it was the first time in her recollection that she spoke the name Yugoslavia. But from then on her interest in the Balkan country rose with amazing rapidity. In 1936 and 1937 and in subsequent years Rebecca West visited Yugoslavia, tried to learn the language, studied the history and literature of the Croats, Slovenes, and Serbs, searched the country for old folklore habits, and went through a skyscraper stack of books on Yugoslavia written in English, French, and German.

The result of all those pilgrimages and studies is contained in two big volumes of about 500,000 words, written over a period of six years and completed just when Yugoslavia fell under the Nazi panzers and the treachery of homegrown fascists. The lamb and the falcon of the book's title are symbolical. The black lamb was used in an old pagan sacrifice rite which Miss West attended in the mountains at the Yugoslav Greek frontier. The grey falcon is the symbolic bird of an old folk song. In Miss West's opinion the black lamb stands for the "tortured, black Slav soul," whereas the falcon signifies the "invaders" who have so often ravaged the country.

This sort of mystic symbolism permeates the book. Miss West has a poet's imagination, and she has caught much of the picturesque side of Balkan life in her narrative. As a travel diary Miss West's two volumes are an extraordinary job. As an imaginative writer's view of a foreign country the *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* is an interesting work. But the book by no means yields the results one might expect from its extensive bibliography and the assertions of both publisher and author that it was preceded by a thorough study of Yugoslav political, historical, and sociological problems. Miss West has never understood the real forces of Balkan history. She has not seen the big fundamental problem of Yugoslavia—the problem of the peasant, the problem of the national and social emancipation of the peasant masses constituting eighty percent of the population. She regards King Alexander, who helped promote fascism in the Balkans, as exactly the same shiny figure he was in the propaganda textbooks of his own dictatorial regime. An example of the author's political naivete—to put it kindly—is her explanation of the putsch by which Alexander proclaimed himself dictator: Miss West simply states that ". . . the king had the unhappy idea" of changing the constitution. And her remarks about the policy of the Soviet Union—putting Stalin and Chamberlain on the same level—are no more intelligent.

It would have been wiser of Miss West to have written a straight-out novel about Yugoslavia instead of this hybrid of fiction and factual report.

MILAN VLASOV.

## "Poor White"

FIRE IN THE SKY, *by Tarleton Collier. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.*

LOLLY MOORE begins life riding along the Georgia road at sundown on her Ma's stooped shoulder, once more on the lookout for cotton to hoe on the next bossman's place. At least that's how Lolly remembers it. With them is Georgy, a big-mouthed, staunch woman who can outdo any man in the fields. The road behind Lolly and her Ma is empty, or dark with things best forgot—but ahead everything blazes in the lowering sun in full glory: fire in the sky for Lolly's eager taking.

With this scene young Lolly takes us with her into her Georgia sharecropper's world, makes us feel and know it. Of the many novels and their play and screen versions portraying southern "poor whites," this is the first, to my mind, to give a true, balanced picture. *Fire in the Sky* reveals genuine insight. Tarleton Collier, a Georgia newspaperman, has resisted in his novel the usual playing-to-the-gallery melodrama of violence and distorted sex patterns, nor has he sinned in the other extreme of sentimental pity and despair. Lolly and her Ma, Georgy, crafty, explosive Randy, and Frank, the bookread, far-seeing farmboy whom Lolly grows up to love and marry, are flesh and blood croppers whom anyone in the Cotton Belt would recognize.

Lolly loses Frank when he goes to the rescue of a little Negro boy some white hoodlums are tormenting for the hell of it. After Frank's death, nineteen-year old Lolly gets work in a down-at-heel hotel and begins her long fight to raise her baby girl, Lit, and keep a decent name for them both. Through Frank she has come to understand something of what it is all about, that it's the whole sharecropping, job-stealing setup that's wrong.

Lon Porter, a young lawyer on his way "up and up," helps Lolly, yet never lets his feeling for her or anything else stand between him and his career. After his well timed marriage to a society girl, Lon goes to Congress and Lolly throws herself more than ever into her consuming love and struggle for her girl, Lit. Some years later Lon admits to Lolly all he has missed. He joins with New Deal forces against the KKK and old-time machine, willing to fight at last for what Lolly has convinced him is right. His wife dead, Lon comes for Lolly, but she has been independent and brushed aside too long to be sure now that she wants Lon. The book ends with her victory over her devouring mother love; so that the duty-bound Lit is free to marry the man she loves.

Somehow the latter part of the book proves a letdown, probably because the novel's theme and earlier chapters led me to expect a strong, illuminating climax. But Lolly and her years in the cotton fields and her fire in the sky will stay by this reader for a long time.

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# "THE GIRL FROM LENINGRAD"

***A story of war nurses and soldiers is the theme of the latest Soviet film. "A lovely thing," Joy Davidman reports. Nothing of studio in the best of all shots of modern war.***

THE latest Soviet film treats a theme made commonplace by endless Hollywood repetitions, and thereby proves that no subject is ever commonplace, when approached with intelligence and perception. *The Girl from Leningrad* is a story of war nurses and soldiers; its lovely heroine has a fiance who is reported missing, a wounded admirer, an emotional problem involving both. Eventually, when she herself is wounded, the fiance turns up at her hospital bed, and there is a happy ending. Now this is all familiar material; yet, as the film progresses, there is nothing trite about it, nothing romanticized or cheapened or reduced to showy formula. One realizes that nurses and soldiers actually are both heroic and human; that these emotional problems do occur in real life as well as on the screen.

*The Girl from Leningrad* is a lovely thing in itself, swiftly told, beautifully acted, and photographed with the Soviet's ever-increasing mastery of the camera. Always preeminent in the pictorial use of film, the Soviet gives us, here, breathtaking shots of the snowy woods around the Mannerheim Line; and uses with new power such dynamic devices as the montage to dramatize its scenes of fighting. These are perhaps the best of all shots of modern war; there is nothing of the studio, no cornflake snow, in that terrible wintry fighting.

But the magnificent technique, the moving story, are not the most significant things about *The Girl from Leningrad.* What makes it a fine, serious film instead of just another soldier-nurse number is the dignity of its attitude toward human beings, and especially toward women. The nurses from Leningrad are pretty girls; they have their little vanities, they like masculine attention and a good time, they fall in love. But that is not their whole business in life. In many films the nurse's activities have been confined usually to placing a cool hand on a man's forehead or screaming in his arms during an air raid. In *The Girl from Leningrad* the nurses are competent soldiers ready for emergencies. The film's most dramatic sequence deals with a trip to the actual battlefront. They start out in a truck, which hits a land mine; they proceed on skis. One nurse is shot by a sniper; they deal with the sniper, bury the girl, and go on. They are in the trenches during an attack on the Mannerheim Line, and slip forward almost instantly to rescue the wounded. On the way back to base, their truck is ambushed by the enemy, and they man the machine guns in defense of themselves and their patients until help arrives.

Similarly, there is no helplessness about their treatment of their emotional tangles. The one who is a little vain and silly—she tries to wear dressy shoes with her uniform—runs away one afternoon for an innocent joy-ride on a truck. This is regarded as a piece of childish irresponsibility, as indeed it is, by the other girls, whose judgment weighs heavily on Tamara. In self-defense she accuses the heroine, the chief nurse, of similar irresponsibility in allowing a wounded hero to fall in love with her without telling him of her engagement.

In *The Girl from Leningrad* the wounded soldier needs to love his nurse because he needs an interest in life; once he has fought his way back to health his affection becomes a devoted and comradely friendship. There is never the slightest question of Natasha's love for Sergei, her fiance; she has chosen him; she is not an unstable person; she does not change her mind the minute a new man appears. The falsity of many Hollywood movies' approach to what they call love was never more manifest than after a visit to this Russian film. To sum it up, in the Soviet a woman is not merely an erotic object; she is a person.

But *The Girl from Leningrad* is very far from being a treatise on women's rights; on the contrary, these rights are so much a matter of course to the people in the film that they need never be stated. The film has other things to work with. Its dramatic and at times tragic story is interspersed, after the manner both of the Soviet and Shakespeare, with delectable comic scenes. There is a particularly brilliant moment in which the city-bred nurses milk their first cow—old stuff, but still good.

As the heroine, Zoya Fyodorova carries the picture almost entirely, the other characters being little more than sketches. She is more than equal to the job; beautiful, and beautifully photographed, she does not concentrate on showing her best profile; a clever emotional actress, she neither overemphasizes her suffering nor, even more important, overemphasizes her stiff upper lip. Her directness and honesty are extraordinarily likable; the same may be said for *The Girl from Leningrad.*

THE SURREALIST FILM FESTIVAL now in progress at New York's Fifth Avenue playhouse offers what are supposed to be highly experimental and imaginative films; it is therefore something of a shock to find their camera technique either conventional or crudely

*Scene from "The Girl from Leningrad."*



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tricky, their imagination totally absent. *Object Lesson* is no more than a series of surrealist lantern slides, all silly; *Lot in Sodom* is a pretentious ballet, with some camera distortion—and some Hitlerite distortions. The most stereotyped Hollywood B picture has a more flexible and creative use of the camera than these. Cocteau's *Blood of a Poet,* more ambitious, comes under much the same heading; it attempts an approximation of dreaming, using all the camera tricks in the bag to make mirrors melt, mouths appear on men's hands, statues speak and keyholes open upon fantastic vistas. But nothing is so dull as listening to someone else's dreams, and M. Cocteau's are singularly meaningless. His technique would be good fun in a production of *Alice in Wonderland;* here, exploited for its own sake, it is completely sterile.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

## American Ballads

### *Elie Siegmeister directs the Ballad Singers at New York's Town Hall.*

THE American Ballad Singers form a remarkable group. When the six singers and their director, Elie Siegmeister, take their places seated around a table, they infuse a formal concert hall with the warmth and intimacy of the parlor. When they start singing, they win its rightful place in the concert hall for the song of the hills, the plantations, and the trail.

Not only are the manner and material of the American Ballad Singers unorthodox; so is the vocal combination. Not that the group hasn't the usual complement of sopranos, contralto, tenor, baritone, and bass. It has. But the individual voices are just that, *individual.* The tenor is lyrical and delicate, the baritone and bass robust and forthright; one soprano is full-voiced and coloratura, the other small-voiced and almost plain, while the contralto is big, full, and lusty. Yet, blended in song these individual characteristics disappear—not mechanically—but by sublimation to the *whole* through intelligent application. Siegmeister's conducting is informal and unobtrusive and his directions appear to be followed more by assent than obedience; but his beat, when he does employ it, is so authoritative, no doubt remains about where to place the credit for the ensemble's magnificent coordination.

For their third annual Town Hall appearance the Singers unveiled two items. The first, a group of Catskill (New York) Mountains folk songs, contained a gem called "The Devil and the Farmer's Wife," and the group sang it to a fare-thee-well, getting everything out of this rollicking tale of an old "rip" who knocked hell out of the devil and was sent "clappety-smack" back to her farmer-husband (who said "I'm cursed. She went to Hell and came back worse!"). The second item, Elie Siegmeister's own "American Legend," was less successful. Little more than a medley of oft-told tunes and tales of America's legendary heroes (Boone, Bunyan, Crockett, etc.), it made its points in gentle melodies (in slow three-quarter time, for a considerable portion) and quiet-spoken recitatives. It was hardly the appropriate vehicle for gusty legends and so the composition failed to stir its auditors.

Of the other numbers on the program, many thrilled, most were interesting, and none was not worth hearing. Only at the method of grouping these numbers can a serious criticism of the concert be directed. True, the Catskill Folk Music group unfolded a new picture of an area thought of only as a summer vacation resort, and American Christmas Carols gave a fair representation to various regions treating with the Birth of Christ through their songs (from "A Virgin Unspotted"—one of the first carols written on the North American continent —to "Mary Had a Baby," sung by Negro congregations in the South). But Folk Songs of Today included at least one number 200 years old and America on the Move grouped "Frog Went a'Courtin' " (a children's song) and "Cape Cod Girls" (a sea chanty) with numbers like "Ode on Science" (a song from our Revolutionary days which declares: "All haughty tyrants we disdain, and shout 'Long Live Americay!' "), "Ling O'Day" (a song of runaway slaves), and "Ho for California." Such discursiveness produced an effect of unevenness and caused flagging interest.

Another criticism, a minor one, may be leveled at the manner in which some of the humorous songs were delineated. In the children's songs, the performers (with the work of Helen Yorke, the "plain" soprano, excelling) extracted the maximum of joyousness and charm from them without once becoming "cute." But in the songs of the hill people and the Okies, some of the performers went in for lettered (and mannered) reproduction of the dialects, leaning heavily on the "laugh lines"; an unnecessary hamminess that tended to lower the artistic level of the group.

Special mention is due Earl Rogers, the tenor of the Ballad Singers. His voice is, in a word, beautiful. It has the same haunting quality remembered of the Irish street singer in "The Informer," and when he sang the solo parts of "Ah'm Broke an' Hungry" (sans dialect) and "I'm a Wayfaring Stranger," he communicated all the poignancy implicit in the songs, at the same time vesting them with tremendous dignity. When he sang the lead voice in the group numbers, a luminous quality pervaded the tonal palette of the ensemble.

Filling the auditorium of Town Hall is no small feat for a musical group even when operating under the obvious advantages of management by the NBC or CBS Artists Bureaus. Accomplishing that feat, as the American Ballad Singers did, under the sponsorship of the semi-professional American Youth Theater, makes clear enough just what position in the concert-going world the American Ballad Singers have won.

ELLIOTT GRENNARD.

## "Brooklyn, USA"

### *Murder, Inc., as dramatized by John Bright and Asa Bordages.*

OUT of the horrendous materials of yesterday's headlines, John Bright and Asa Bordages have wrought a better than average murder melodrama about the operations of Brooklyn's "Murder Incorporated." Mr. Bordages is a *World-Telegram* staff-writer, who presumably supplied much of the police-reporter's information about the depredations of the gorillas who prey on union men, small store owners, and have many fingers in many other pies. Mr. Bright is the Hollywood scenarist who wrote some of the best films in which Jimmy Cagney has appeared.

In magnificent settings by Howard Bay —the most evocative, the most atmospheric of the season—the playwrights have set in motion and attempted to expose the activities of that submarginal world that is best described in political economy as the *lumpen-proletariat.* These men and women have been forced out of society. They prey upon society and, in turn, they are the tools of social forces who also prey upon society. They are the fingermen, the gunmen, the molls with whose superficial aspects we are so familiar. Only under the hands of Bright and Bordages something of their political and economic significance is made apparent.

It was during the East Coast seamen's strike of 1936 that New York first got an inkling of what was going on on the waterfront. Many of the facts never reached the light of news-print, but it was freely whispered that seamen picketing the ship-owners' docks were frequently "dumped," and not infrequently killed by goons in the employ of these same owners. The dock workers themselves had long suffered from the depredations of these gorillas, and progressive leaders emerged from among these exploited men to lead the fight on racketeering and murder.

One of these men was Pete Panto, who was murdered by the "combination" to stop his activities in behalf of the longshoremen. The murder of Panto is re-enacted in *Brooklyn, USA* in a scene that possesses great dramatic power. Only here he is called Nick Santo. The playwrights are to be congratulated for their understanding of Panto's role and for their implicit exposure of the powers that got rid of him.

Only (if we have the right to criticize in this fashion), we can demand that Bright and Bordages should have been more explicit. No harm could have come of a courageous exposure of the men behind the gorillas who ice-picked Santo. Who were these men? For they were even more powerful than the Camardas, the Anastasias, the Maiones, the Reles, whose counterparts are shown in action on the stage. What were their connections with the ship owners who opposed organization on the waterfront? Or with men still more powerful?

For if the authors have intimated that these



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men were merely the tools of greater figures, they have no more than intimated. They have not put the finger on the potential fascists within our own democracy who are only biding time and opportunity to put into practice —on a huge scale—what they already successfully practice on a small one.

In the sense that these connections with the hidden fascists are not more thoroughly revealed, *Brooklyn, USA* is disappointing. It is disappointing too, in the fact that when violent action is not forthcoming on the stage (such as the murder of Santo, and later of the barber Louis Cohen), the play tends to be somewhat static. Characters sit around and chew the fat too much, when they are not shouting at each other. And director Lem Ward should have known that excitement on the stage cannot be evoked by actors talking rapidly and incoherently. Much of what they say (much of it very valuable for its content), is lost through poor articulation.

But a progressive melodrama—even though it be no more than melodrama—is not to be snooted these days. There have been too many rubber-stamp melodramas packed with gangsters flourishing "heaters," and devoid of any social or political significance. *Brooklyn, USA* provides some of that significance in its understanding of the relationship between its characters and the society that has rejected them. We understand something of how young boys become enmeshed in crime; of how women become prostitutes and brothel keepers; of how men who have once gone wrong are kept within control of the "national combination" that so shrewdly understands the difficulties in the way of their readjustment to society.

So that even if we had the right to demand more than Bright and Bordages have supplied, we can be grateful for what they have given us: that gangsterism is of a piece with fascism; that there are evil forces at work in our society that make capital of people's necessity for food and shelter, corrupt the weak, debase the potentially strong.

The large cast supplies many performances, some of which are uneven, some of which are excellent. Of the latter, we can mention young Sidney Lumet, as the "punk kid" who conveys to his audience some understanding of the problems of adolescent boys in slum areas. Martin Wolfson, who obviously understood the full implications of his role as the barber, Louis Cohen, is quite affecting—he reaches the audience immediately and personally. As the ex-brothel madam, Adelaide Klein brings to bear her wide experience on the radio and in the theater, to create a viable character. Ben Ross, as a progressive longshoreman, and Victor Christian as the murdered Santo, provide effective characterizations of a type we see too seldom on the stage—good union men in roles approximating their true importance—as pillars of our democratic society.

FERDINAND BRUCKNER was an important and recognized dramatist in pre-Hitler Germany. He has been an exile since the Nazis came to power, because he is a sensitive and intelligent liberal. *The Criminals* was written almost ten years ago, and will play at the New School for Social Research through January 3.

The play is worth seeing despite the fact that it is by no means a startling or profound dramatic effort. It is worth seeing because it introduces Lili Darvas to the American stage—and because it is a fine example of the fact that you cannot write profound satire without a deep understanding of social forces. Mr. Bruckner satirizes the processes of justice under the Weimar Republic, and he pours scorn upon the emergent Nazi youth movement. He indicates (only slightly) how the Nazi movement caught the youthful imagination of the younger Germans—they lived in poverty and disillusionment, were ripe for anything that offered "hope." He indicates (practically not at all) the economic basis of Nazi fascism—the rich, who will become richer through the movement. But mostly Bruckner is concerned about the miscarriage of justice. His chief spokesman in the play is a young liberal student of philosophy who, ironically, is called "sophomoric" by one of his Nazi contemporaries. For the young Nazis in this well intentioned play are strangely enough the only life-like dramatic forces in the piece, and the student is (by virtue of what he says and does) most truly sophomoric! Mr. Bruckner surely did not intend it that way.

The young student's wife becomes pregnant; they cannot afford a child; in desperation she tries to drown herself. A middle-aged cook, violently jealous of her waiter-lover's other mistresses, kills one of them and casts the blame on him. A young Nazi, implicated in the murder of a "traitor," casts the blame on an innocent youth. Mr. Bruckner's satiric irony has it that these three innocents —the student's wife, the waiter-Lothario, the unjustly accused youth—all pay for the crimes of the really guilty, the real criminals.

To demonstrate this thesis he has stacked his cards—most mechanically, most superficially. But in the course of the drama he touches movingly upon many facts that possess inherent emotional vigor: the desire of the impoverished student and his wife for a child; the desire of a middle-aged, sterile woman (the cook) to keep her man and have a child; the desire of other characters for a better Germany. But Mr. Bruckner has nowhere fused the material with the execution, the content with reality.

Lili Darvas (wife of Ferenc Molnar) is an accomplished actress; there should be plenty of work for her here in America, if any producer knows an actress from a clothes horse. As the cook, she plays with real emotional power in an underwritten role. In a small part, Martin Ritt offers conviction rarely found among the other members of the studio-company. The direction, by Sanford Meisner, is intelligent, flexible, and transcends at points the limitations of his material.

ALVAH BESSIE.



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## Anna Sokolow

***Dance recital by a talented artist and her group.***

ANNA SOKOLOW'S recital at the Theresa L. Kaufmann Auditorium in New York was something of a retrospective dance show by a young and talented artist. There were three new brief dances, two others which were first seen in New York last year, two which go back about three years, and two which date from around 1935.

"Prelude," the new opening dance by the group and Miss Sokolow, had moments of great dignity and quiet exultation—a dance dedicated to the brave anti-fascist fighters—who "die by the thousands in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, to save our heritage." The other new numbers were "Mill Doors," based on a poem by Carl Sandburg and performed by three members of the group, and "Mama Beautiful," the Mike Quin poem which appeared in the *Daily Worker* several months ago. Despite their relatively simple composition, they revealed again Miss Sokolow's sharp sense of form and dramatic intensity.

Of the two Spanish suites, *"Caprichiosas"* and "Homage to Garcia Lorca" (both reviewed in these pages at the time of their first performance in New York last year), the most persuasive number is Miss Sokolow's solo "Lament for the Death of a Bullfighter." Here the dancer's passionate and poignant sense of tragedy reaches a new high. *"Caprichiosas,"* based on Goya's etchings, have been improved by a new ending, but while they contain much that is gay and charming and effective, they do not begin to measure up to the dancer's potentialities and proven gifts as a group choreographer—especially when contrasted with "Strange American Funeral" based on the Mike Gold poem, a high point of the dance season when it was first seen six years ago.

Choreographically "Funeral" ranks with the first rate dance compositions of the past decade; its originality and dynamics made it a classic for several years. But changes in world history have reduced a once powerful indictment to an irrelevant statement. To a certain extent the same criticism might be made of "Exile" and "Slaughter of the Innocents." Whereas "Prelude" moves in the realm of the consistently heroic and inevitably victorious, these other dances are keyed to a note of suffering and sorrow and bitter defiance. Today other emotions are demanded of us.

This is the fate of contemporary art, and not only in the dance. The artist who works in a medium which bases itself on immediate and topical sources must be prepared to ignore work which does not partake of an awareness toward new kinds of action today. Artists must move with the movements of the people, must assist in mobilizing them into action. And an artist like Anna Sokolow, who rose on the tide of anti-fascist art from 1934 on, can come into her own at this time. She has achieved real mastery of her field and


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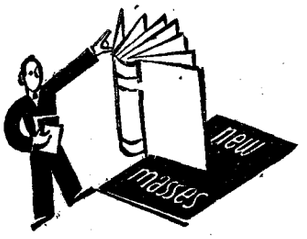


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proved her top ranking both in terms of repertoire and talent.

Miss Sokolow has all the elements that go into the making of a truly mature dancer and choreographer: creative richness, complete grasp of the materials of her craft, technical invention, choreographic ingenuity, sensitiveness, and an acute feeling for the dramatic and the theatrical. But unless these talents are again sunk deep into the rich field of the world today, they will be dissipated, and to the habitual dance-goers (who came in large numbers to this recital) the program takes on the aspect of a revival of old favorites.

Alex North as musical director gave his usual excellent and completely competent services, as did Arno Tanney, tenor.

FRANCIS STEUBEN.

# PROGRESSIVE'S ALMANAC

"PROGRESSIVE'S Almanac" is a calendar of meetings, dances, luncheons, and cultural activities within the progressive movement. This list is published in connection with NEW MASSES' Clearing Bureau, created for the purpose of avoiding conflicting dates for various affairs. Fraternal organizations, trade unions, political bodies, etc., throughout the country are urged to notify NEW MASSES' Clearing Bureau of events which they have scheduled. Service of the Clearing Bureau is free.

## DECEMBER

**31**—(New Year's Eve) NEW MASSES, Howitzer Hop, Royal Windsor.

## JANUARY

**3-31**—Saturday Forum Luncheon Group. Lectures every Saturday by well known novelists and critics. Rogers Corner Restaurant, 8th Ave. and 50th St., 12:30 P.M.

**3**—Council for Negro Culture, Salute to Negro Troops, Golden Gate Ballroom (217 W. 125th St.).

**4-31**—Almanac Singers, Sunday afternoons, 130 W. 10th, 2 P.M.

**5**—N. Y. State Committee Communist Party—Lenin Memorial, Madison Square Garden.

**5**—Workers School, Winter Term Registration all month, 35 E. 12th.

**9**—NEW MASSES Open Editorial Meeting—Editors, Contributors and Readers—Admission free—Webster Hall.

**11-25**—Helen Tamiris, Three Sunday Eve. Recitals, Studio, 434 Lafayette St., N. Y. C.

**11**—Progressive Committee, A. L. P. Piano recital and concert, Ray Lev, Brooklyn Academy of Music.

**17**—Popular Theater—Square Dance and Party, Greco Fencing Academy, 940-8 Broadway.

**25**—NEW MASSES, Choral Group Festival, place to be announced.

**31**—I. W. O. Trade branches, Star Concert, Town Hall.

**31**—Fur Workers—Annual Mid-winter Ball—Royal Palms Hotel, Los Angeles.


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# GOINGS ON

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WEEK'S NEWS by JOSEPH NORTH, Editor, New Masses, Sun., Jan. 4th, 8:30 P.M., Workers School, 35 E. 12 St. Admission 25c.


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# *First Date for the New Year*

# FRIDAY, JAN. 9th

The turn of the calendar is a time to take stock, to lay plans for the future. This is particularly true for 1942 when the nation is rolling up its sleeves and going after the common enemy. This year, the editors of New Masses don't want to keep their plans to themselves. We are, after all, a magazine that belongs to its entire readership. And in times like these, people naturally draw closer to one another than ever before. Therefore, we wish to invite you to

# AN OPEN EDITORIAL BOARD MEETING OF NEW MASSES

or in other words, a get-together of readers, contributors, editors AT WEBSTER HALL, IN NEW YORK ON FRIDAY EVENING, JANUARY 9th AT 8 SHARP—ADMISSION FREE. Speakers will include:

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The idea is as simple as we think it's novel. We want our readers and their friends to sit in on a typical meeting of the editors. We want our readers and friends to take a hand in the discussion of the magazine in all its phases. Apart from all else it will be an interesting evening. Many of New Masses' artists and writers will participate. They have something to say on the coming year's work and you will want to hear them say it. Bring a friend along who hasn't been reading the magazine regularly, or at all. MAKE IT A DATE TO MEET WITH ALL THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE NEW MASSES.

THE EDITORS



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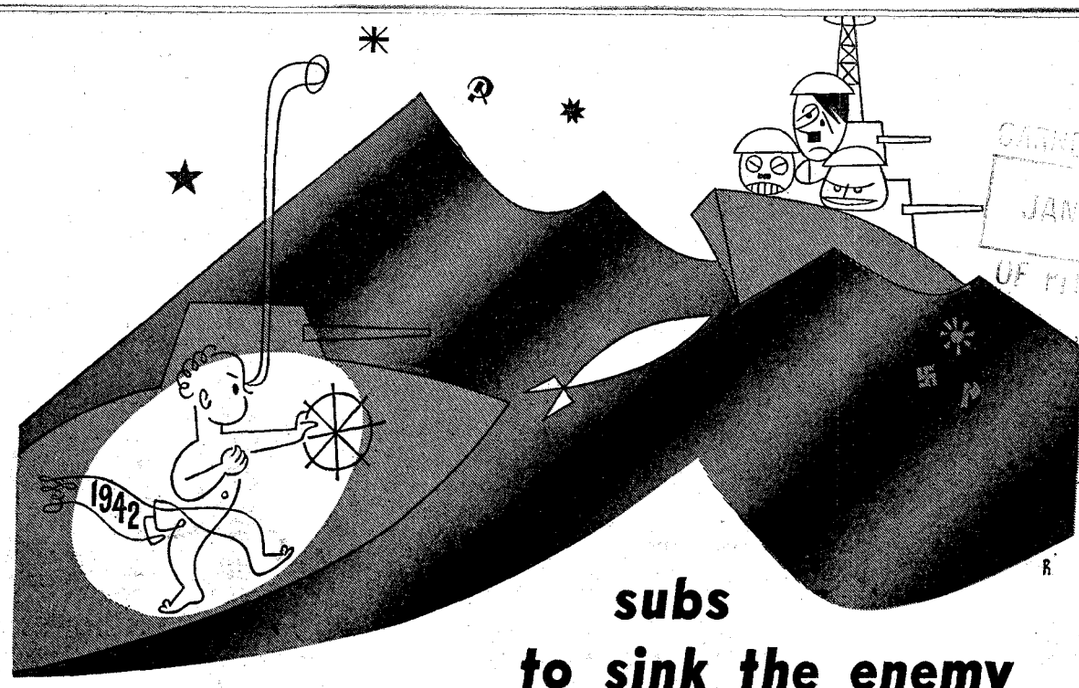


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